UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

THE RECEPTION OF THE ECCLESIOLOGY OF VATICAN II: SOME PROSPECTS FOR THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN GHANA

BY

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DECLARATION

This is to certify that this thesis is the result of research undertaken by John Kobina Louis, under the supervision of Prof. Cephas N. Omenyo, Prof. Giacomo Canobbio and Dr. George Ossom-Batsa, towards the award of Ph.D. in the Department for the Study of Religions, University of Ghana.

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ABSTRACT

This research seeks to critically investigate the process of reception of the communion-based 'mosaic' ecclesiology of Vatican II by the Catholic Church in Ghana, with the view of making some proposals to enhance it. The theology of the 'church as communion' has become predominant in Catholic ecclesiology since the 1985 Extraordinary Synod of Bishops (Rome). And about a decade after the Extraordinary Synod, the first *Special Assembly for Africa of the Synod of Bishops* (1994) proposed the contextualization of the ecclesiology of communion as 'family of God', while indicating that it should be complemented with other ecclesiological models. However, almost fifty years after the closing of Vatican II, three decades after the Extraordinary Synod, and two decades after the first *Special Assembly for Africa*, the reception in *praxis* of the communion ecclesiology by the Catholic Church in Ghana seems to be lagging behind its *theoretical* reception. Furthermore, there seems to be no attempt in the theological works in the local church (Ghana) to complement the model church-*family of God* with other ecclesiological models.

A predominantly theological approach has been employed. Firstly, as a theological work, this thesis employs an expository-critical approach. That is, there is an attempt to critically synthesize the works of various authors, as well as the relevant documents of Vatican II and other documents of the church. Secondly, to facilitate the process of harmonizing the model church-*family of God* with other ecclesiological models, Avery Dulles' theological tool of multi-models has been employed. Thirdly, to ascertain the extent of reception of the conciliar ecclesiology by the Catholic Church in Ghana, we have examined some of the documents of the local church. In addition, however, we have employed some empirical research methods. These methods include the use of personal interviews, questionnaires, focus group discussions, as well as personal experiences and observations.

The contributions of this thesis are in four main areas. Firstly, in furtherance to the works of other African theologians who demonstrate the harmonization of the model of communion, or church-*family of God*, with other ecclesiological models in a *uni*directional way, a *dual*-directional (symbiotic) harmonization has been articulated. Secondly, it has been suggested that the relationship between the ecclesial constitutive elements (described with the aid of models) and the mystery of the church (itself) is a kind of synergy. Thirdly, this thesis articulates the extent of reception of the conciliar communion ecclesiology by the Catholic Church in Ghana. Fourthly, some practical recommendations for the restructuring of the Catholic Church in Ghana aimed at enhancing the sense of belonging, co-responsibility and active participation of all the faithful in the church's life and mission have been made.

Finally, therefore, this thesis challenges the Catholic Church in Ghana to embrace a more comprehensive communion-based ecclesiology, and to tow a path that will enhance its reception in *praxis*.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the glory of God

and to the growth of the Catholic Church in Ghana as a loving family of God.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AA	Vatican II, Decree on the Apostolate of the Lay People, *Apostolicam actuositatem*, 18 November 1965
AAS	*Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, Vatican
AECAWA	Association of Episcopal Conferences of Anglophone West Africa
AFER	African Ecclesial Review, Eldoret, Kenya
AG	Vatican II, Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity, *Ad gentes divinitus*, 7 December 1965
AMECEA	Association of Member Episcopal Conferences of East Africa
BCCs	Basic Christian Communities
BECs	Basic Ecclesial Communities
Can.	Canon
CD	Vatican II, Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church, *Christus Dominus*, 28 October 1965
CDF	Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith
cf.	*Confer*
CIWA	Catholic Institute of West Africa, Port Harcourt, Nigeria
CN	Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Communionis notio, Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on Some Aspects of the Church Understood as Communion*, 28 May 1992
Col.	Paul's letter to the Colossians
Cor.	Paul's letter to the Corinthians; the numbers (1 and 2) distinguish the letters
CSEL	*Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum*
CUEA	Catholic University of East Africa, Nairobi
DV	Vatican II, Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation*, Dei verbum*, 18 November 1965
ed.	Edition (when ed. is preceded by 2nd, 3rd, etc.)
ed. /eds	editor/editors
EIA	John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation, *Ecclesia in Africa: On the Church and its Evangelizing Mission towards the Year 2000*, Vatican 1995

EIG	First National Catholic Pastoral Congress, *Instrumentum Laboris*, *Ecclesia in Ghana*: *On the Church in Ghana and its Evangelizing Mission in the Third Millennium,* Cape Coast 1997
EN	Paul VI, Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii nuntiandi*, 8 December 1975
Eph.	Paul's letter to the Ephesians
etc.	*et cetera*
Exod.	The Book of Exodus
FABC	Federation of Asian Catholic Bishops' Conferences
Fr.	Father
Gal.	Paul's letter to the Galatians
GCBC	Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference
Gen.	The Book of Genesis
GS	Vatican II, Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, *Gaudium et spes*, 7 December 1965
Heb.	Letter to the Hebrews
John	The Gospel According to John
Lev.	The Book of Leviticus
LEV	Liberia Editrice Vaticana
LG	Vatican II, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen gentium*, 21 November 1964
Luke	The Gospel According to Luke
Mark	The Gospel According to Mark
Matt.	The Gospel According to Matthew
Msgr.	Monsignor
NA	Vatican II, Declaration on the Relation of the Church to non-Christian Religions, *Nostra aetate*, 28 October 1965
no. /nos	Number/numbers
OT	Vatican II, Decree on the Training of Priests, *Optatam totius*, 28 October 1965
p. /pp.	Page/pages
Pet.	Letter of Peter; the numbers (1 and 2) distinguish the letters
Ph.D.	*Philosophiae Doctor*, Doctor of Philosophy

Phil.	Paul's letter to the Philippians
PL	J. P. Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, 1878-1890
PO	Vatican II, Decree on the Life and Ministry of Priests, *Presbyterorum ordinis*, 7 December 1965
RECOWA	Regional Episcopal Conferences of West Africa
Rev.	The Book of Revelations
Rev.	Reverend (when used as a title)
Rom.	Paul's letter to the Romans
SC	Vatican II, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum concilium*, 4 December 1963
SCCs	Small Christian Communities
SECAM	Symposium of Episcopal Conference of Africa and Madagascar
S.J.	Society of Jesus, *Jesuits*
SMA	*Societas Missionum ad Afros*; Society of African Missions
SVD	*Societas Verbi Divini*; Society of Divine Word Missionaries
TEPPCON	Tamale Ecclesiastical Province Pastoral Conference
Thess.	Paul's letter to the Thessalonians; the numbers (1 and 2) distinguish the letters
Tim.	Paul's letter to Timothy; the numbers (1 and 2) distinguish the letters
UR	Vatican II, Decree on Ecumenism, *Unitatis redintegratio*, 21 November 1964
WCC	World Council of Churches

PART ONE: THE ECCLESIOLOGY OF VATICAN II AND ITS RECEPTION

The first part of this thesis consists of the introductory and second chapters. In the introductory chapter, the background to the study, statement of problem, research questions and objectives, conceptual framework and limitations, methodology, a preliminary literature review, and the significance of the study are presented. Among other things, the literature review gives an insight into the 'mosaic' ecclesiology of Vatican II and indicates the appropriateness of the use of models to theologically articulate it. The second chapter looks at the reception of the ecclesiology of Vatican II in the Catholic world in the past fifty years, highlighting that since the 1985 Extraordinary Synod of Bishops, the communion model of the church has generally been considered as the key to comprehending the conciliar ecclesiology.

CHAPTER ONE: GENERAL INTRODUCTION – ECCLESIOLOGY OF VATICAN II

1.1 Background

On 25 January 1959, Pope John XXIII announced his intention of convoking an ecumenical council of the Roman Catholic Church. After the preparatory phase, the council, which was the twenty-first in the history of the Catholic Church, and the second to be held at the Vatican, began on 11 October 1962. In all there were four sessions of ten weeks each. By the time the Second Vatican Council officially ended on 8 December 1965, it had issued sixteen documents that dealt with the nature of the church, her mission, her pastoral approach in the modern world and ecumenism, among other topics.[1] Already in 1967, Avery Dulles described the council as 'one of the greatest turning points in the history of the Catholic Church.'[2] This assessment of the council by Dulles is still valid today. Hence, Joseph A. Komonchak rightly says that 'it is now a commonplace … to speak of the council as a *watershed;* 20th-century church history is now divided into two periods: pre-conciliar and post-conciliar.'[3]

Pope John Paul II, in turn, looking back to the council in which he took part as a young bishop, does not only underscore its great importance, but also its continuous relevance for the Catholic Church in the twenty-first century:[4]

[1] *cf.* J.W. O'Malley, 'Introduction' in D.G. Schultenover (ed.), *Vatican II: Did Anything Happen?* (New York: Continuum, 2007), pp. 1-5.
[2] A. Dulles, *The Dimensions of the Church: A Post-conciliar Reflection* (New York: Newman, 1967), p. vii.
[3] J.A. Komonchak, 'Vatican II as an "Event"' in D.G. Schultenover (ed.), *Vatican II: Did Anything Happen?,* p. 29.
[4] O'Malley, 'Introduction', pp. 22-3; A. Melloni & G. Ruggieri, 'Introduzione' in A. Melloni & G. Ruggieri (eds), *Chi ha paura del Vaticano II?* (Roma: Carocci, 2009), p.14; Melloni, 'Breve guida ai giudizi sul Vaticano II' in Melloni et al (eds), *Chi ha paura del Vaticano II?*, p. 132.

> With the passing of the years, *the council documents have lost nothing of their value or brilliance*. They need to be read correctly, to be widely known and taken to heart as important and normative texts of the magisterium, within the [Catholic] Church's Tradition. Now that the Jubilee has ended, I feel more than ever in duty bound to point to the council as *the great grace bestowed on the church in the twentieth century*: there we find a sure *compass* by which to take our bearings in the century now beginning.[5]

The above statement shows the continuous relevance of theological researches based on the teachings of the Second Vatican Council. The present research is based on a *principal theme* of the deliberations of the council – namely, its ecclesiology.[6] To delimit this study, its presentation on the ecclesiology of Vatican II focuses mainly on the conciliar 'foundational document'[7], namely the *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Lumen gentium*.[8] In contrast to the Roman Catholic ecclesiology of the previous four centuries, which emphasized the institutional or visible aspect of the church,[9] *Lumen gentium* begins by seeing the church as a mystery.[10] The term 'mystery' as employed by *Lumen gentium* could, however, be misunderstood by some contemporary people; more so when it was not defined in the text itself.[11] For many people today, as Walter Kasper explains, a 'mystery' is understood as something secretive – something that is not worthy of coming to light. It is understood as something which is not transparent, and therefore suspicious. He goes on to give the examples of a secret document, a secret protocol, a secret archive, and secret services. For other people, Kasper continues, the term 'mystery' means a reality that is

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[5] John Paul II, Apostolic Letter, *Novo millennio ineunte*, 6 January 2001, no. 57; the italics in the citation are those of the author.
[6] *Acta Synodalia Sacrosancti Concilli Oecumenici Vatican II*, 1/4 (Vatican: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1970), p. 292; *cf.* C. Theobald, *La ricezione del Vaticano II: 1. Tornare alla sorgente* (Bologna: Dehoniane, 2011), pp. 233, 396; the original French edition is: Theobald, *La recéption du concile Vatican II: 1. Acceder à la source* (Paris: Cerf, 2009); *cf*. Dulles, *The Dimensions of the Church*, p. vii.
[7] J. Ratzinger, *Church, Ecumenism and Politics: New Endeavours in Ecclesiology* (San Francisco: Ignatius, 2008), p. 15; the original German edition is: Ratzinger, *Kirche, Ökumene und Politik: Neue Versuche Ekklesiologie* (Einsiedeln: Johannes, 1987).
[8] Vatican II, *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Lumen gentium*, 21 November 1964.
[9] Dulles, *The Dimensions of the Church*, pp. 2-4.
[10] *Lumen gentium*, no. 8; henceforth, references to this document shall be abbreviated as 'LG'; *cf*. Dulles, *The Dimensions of the Church*, pp. 5-6.
[11] *cf*. B. Kloppenburg, *The Ecclesiology of Vatican II* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald, 1974), p. 14.

enigmatic, strange, esoteric or even obscure. However, as Kasper affirms, the particular sense in which Vatican II uses the term is none of the above.[12]

Vatican II adopted rather the biblical conception of the term 'mystery';[13] and Gérard Philips, who was principally responsible for the introduction of 'The Mystery of the Church' as the first chapter of *Lumen gentium*,[14] explains that by the use of the Pauline term *mysterium*, the council emphasizes the inner supernatural reality of the church. 'In the New Testament,' he says, 'the mystery is the general plan of salvation, which was decreed by the Father, accomplished by the redemptive incarnation of the Son and implemented by the mission of the Spirit in the community of the church as visible organ of union with the divine Persons.'[15] Anticipating any misinterpretation of the term 'mystery', the Theological Commission of the council stated: 'The word "mystery" in this context does not indicate simply that a thing is unknowable or hidden. Rather, as many authorities recognize today, it points to a transcendent, divine reality that has to do with salvation and that is in some sensible way revealed and manifested. The term, therefore, which is found in the bible, is very suitable as a designation for the church.'[16]

Obviously, then, for Vatican II, the church as a mystery is a complex reality – which is both invisible and visible (LG 8). How then can such a complex reality be comprehended and explained? To explain the complex reality of the church, Vatican II, like the New Testament and the Church Fathers, employs several images, metaphors and themes.[17]

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[12] W. Kasper, *Chiesa Cattolica: Essenza–realtà–missione* (Brescia: Queriniana, 2012), pp. 117, 125; the original German edition is: Kasper, *Katholische Kirche: Wesen–Wirklichkeit–Sendung* (Freiburg: Herder, 2011).
[13] Kasper, *Chiesa Cattolica*, pp. 124-7.
[14] O'Malley, 'Vatican II: Did Anything Happen?' in Schultenover (ed.), *Vatican II: Did Anything Happen?*, p. 75.
[15] G. Philips, 'History of the Constitution' in H. Vorgrimler (ed.), *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II*, vol. 1 (New York: Herder, 1967), p. 111.
[16] *Acta Synodalia Sacrosancti Concilii Oecumenici Vaticani II,* 2/1, p. 455.
[17] The terms, 'image' and 'metaphor' have been explained in subsection 1.5.3. Here, it is worth noting that several commentaries and other studies amply demonstrate that the biblical and patristic sources were

Dulles rightly observes that 'in these images it is difficult to draw the line between proper and metaphorical usage.'[18] The images and metaphors used by Vatican II to describe the church include: a shepherd with sheepfold, cultivated land, olive tree, vineyard, true vine and branches, mother, building of God, family/household of God, the new Jerusalem (LG 6); the people of God (LG 9-17); the body and bride of Christ (LG 6, 7); and temple of the Spirit (LG 4, 9). And some of the ecclesiological themes are: the church as communion (LG 4, 7, 9, 49), as sacrament (LG 1, 9, 48), and as institution (LG 18-29).

Thus, though Vatican II does not articulate a systematic ecclesiology, it presents us with what could be seen as a grand *mosaic* art of ecclesiology with several complementary images, metaphors and themes. Standing out in this *mosaic* ecclesiology is the understanding of the *church as communion*.[19] The theology of the *church as communion* has become predominant in Catholic ecclesiology since the 1985 Extraordinary Synod of Bishops, held in Rome to mark the twentieth anniversary of Vatican II.[20]

1.2 Statement of Problem

It is almost fifty years since the closing of Vatican II, about three decades since the Extraordinary Synod of Bishops (1985), two decades since the first *Special Assembly for*

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fundamental to the formulation of the ecclesiology of Vatican II [e.g. H. Vorgrimler (ed.), *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II*, vol. 1; G. Philips, *La chiesa e il suo mistero nel concilio Vaticano II: Storia, testo e commento della costituzione 'Lumen gentium'* (Milan: Jaca, 1975); the original French edition is: Philips, *L'Église et son mystère* (Paris: Desclée & Cie, 1967); A. Flannery (ed.), *Vatican II: The Church Constitution* (Dublin: Scepter, 1966); K. McNamara (ed.), *The Church: A Theological and Pastoral Commentary on the Constitution on the Church* (Dublin: Veritas, 1983)]. Regarding the use of the patristic sources, however, Achille M. Triacca argues that it seems the documents of Vatican II cited them *casually*. His reasons are that: they were sometimes used only to match or compare ideas; at times they were cited in a general manner; other times too, it seems pains were not taken to search for the appropriate patristic text to cite [Triacca, 'L'uso dei "loci" patristici nei documenti del concilio Vaticano II: un caso emblematico e problematico' in E. Del Covolo & A.M. Triacca (eds), *Lo studio dei padri della chiesa oggi* (Roma: LAS, 1991), pp. 152-8]. This notwithstanding, a recent well researched work on patristic theology in *Lumen gentium* by Daniele Gianotti successfully argues against Triacca's position and reinstates the general assertion that patristic literature was a fundamental source for the ecclesiology of Vatican II [Gianotti*, I padri della chiesa al concilio Vaticano II: La teologia patristica nella 'Lumen gentium'* (Bologna: Dehoniane, 2010), pp. 363-405].

[18] Dulles*, Models of the Church*, 2nd ed. (New York: Doubleday, 1987), p. 20.

[19] *cf*. subsection 1.5.4.

[20] *cf*. section 2.5.

Africa of the Synod of Bishops (1994), and it is approaching two decades since the first (Ghana) National Catholic Pastoral Congress (1997), yet while the Catholic Church in Ghana seems to have 'received' (accepted and assimilated) in *theory* the ecclesiology of communion, its reception in *practice* seems to be lagging behind. The first *Special Assembly for Africa of the Synod of Bishops* has proposed the contextualization[21] of the ecclesiology of communion as *family of God*. This has been echoed in some statements of Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference, the first National Pastoral Congress and some diocesan synods in the local church. In addition, the clergy, religious and many lay faithful are able to articulate the notion of the church as *family of God*.[22]

On the practical level, however, the degree of reception of the contextualized ecclesiology of *family of God* leaves much to be desired. In the first place, though the sense of being *family of God* is felt during liturgical celebrations, at occasional church gatherings for socialization, in church associations, and through the involvement of some lay members on parish, diocesan and national commissions, councils and committees, many Catholics feel that there is much more to be done to realize the sense of belonging, co-responsibility and active participation outside the above-mentioned activities.[23] Secondly, though the first *Special Assembly for Africa of the Synod of Bishops*, the first National Pastoral Congress and several diocesan synods have recommended the formation of Small Christian Communities (SCCs) to foster a sense of belonging and mutual support in the local church as a *family of God*, they have not been established in most parishes across the country; and more than half of the established SCCs have become either dysfunctional or extinct.[24] Thirdly, in quite a good number of cases, though lay participation in parish councils and

[21] Generally, in official Catholic documents and among Catholic scholars, 'inculturation' is preferred to 'contextualization'. Arguments in support for our preference for the latter term have been presented in subsection 1.5.5.
[22] See the findings of interviews, responses to questionnaire and focus group discussions (subsections 6.3.3-6.3.4).
[23] See the findings (subsection 6.3.5).
[24] See the findings (subsection 6.3.5b).

committees have been instituted, in practice many lay people feel that the 'consultative' nature of their deliberations fosters clericalism and discourages the active participation of the laity in the decision-making process. Furthermore, the above experience of the lay faithful is replicated on the diocesan and national levels, and sometimes it is worsened as many of them feel remote from diocesan and national leaderships and processes of decision-making.[25] In addition, at those levels, even some priests and religious feel that they are not adequately involved in the decision-making processes.[26] This research, therefore, seeks to critically investigate the extent of reception of the conciliar communion-based ecclesiology in the Catholic Church in Ghana, with the view of making some proposals to enhance it.

1.3 The Research Questions and Objectives

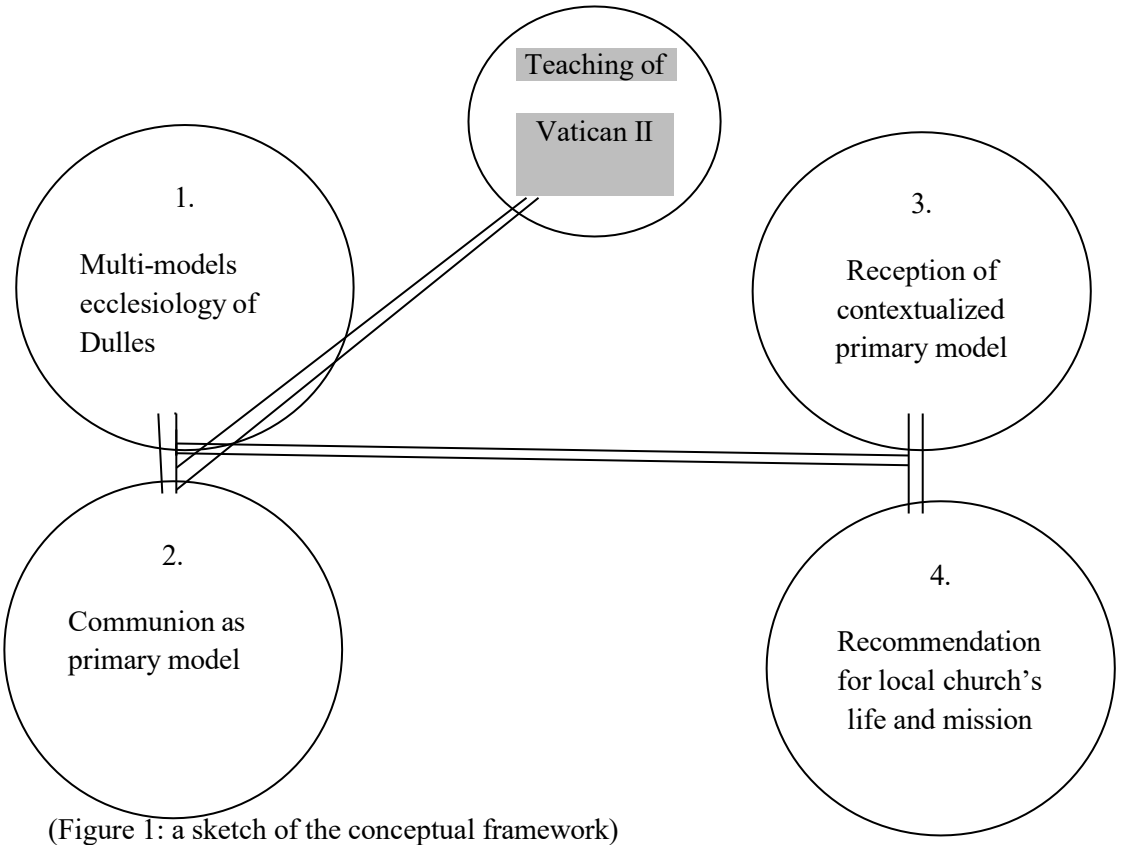
This study is hinged on two main research questions: (a) to what extent has the Roman Catholic Church in Ghana received the communion-based multi-models[27] ecclesiology of Vatican II? And (b) how can the sense of belonging, co-responsibility and active participation in the life and mission of the local church be enhanced in practice?

From the above questions, the following four research objectives have been derived for this study: (a) to articulate a communion-based multi-models ecclesiology in the light of Vatican II; (b) to ascertain the degree of reception in *theory* and *practice* of the model church-*family of God* in the Catholic Church in Ghana; (c) to demonstrate how the contextualized primary model (*family of God*) and Dulles' models could be mutually harmonized; and (d) to suggest ways by which the sense of belonging, co-responsibility and active participation in the life and mission of the local church as *family of God* could be enhanced in practice.

[25] See the findings (subsections 6.3.5a and 6.3.5c).
[26] See the findings (subsection 6.3.5a).
[27] The use of models in ecclesiology, particularly by Dulles, has been explained in subsection 1.5.3.

1.4 The Conceptual Framework and Limitations of the Study

The conceptual framework of this study could be illustrated with the idea of a vehicle with four wheels (see figure below). This research begins with and is directed by the 'mosaic' ecclesiology of Vatican II (steering wheel), as elucidated by the multi-models theological tool of Dulles (first front wheel). Based on this, the communion model is considered as the primary model (second front wheel); and it is mutually harmonized with the models of institution, sacrament, herald, servant and discipleship. There is then an assessment of the reception of the contextualized primary model (*family of God*) in the local church (first rear wheel). Finally, there are some recommendations for the *theoretical* and *practical* reception by the local Catholic Church (second rear wheel).



(Figure 1: a sketch of the conceptual framework)

For the practical reception, this study is limited to the sense of belonging, co-responsibility and active participation of all the faithful in the local church's life and

mission. Another limitation of this study is that it does not investigate the theological foundations of the model of *family of God* in Scripture, tradition, Vatican II and post-conciliar magisterial documents; this has been sufficiently done by other African scholars. Thirdly, this study is not an anthropological investigation into the Ghanaian concept of family; rather it makes use of the relevant findings of other scholars. Fourthly, the fieldwork of this research covers only nine of the dioceses in Ghana. The manner of selecting these dioceses has been indicated in the section (1.6) on methodology.

1.5 Literature Review

The literature review in this section is only a preliminary consideration, as the process of critical review of church documents and the works of some theologians runs through the remaining chapters of this study. In the first place, as this study seeks to address the 'reception' (acceptance and assimilation) of Vatican II, one needs to consider the hermeneutics (interpretation) of the council, for the two issues are interrelated.[28] Secondly, connected with Vatican II's perception of the church as a mystery is the question of its definability. Thirdly, related to this second question is the issue of finding a suitable theological method for elucidating the mystery of the church. Fourthly, authentic reception takes into consideration the context of the 'receiving community'.[29] The process involved has been variously called as adaptation, accommodation, incarnation, indigenization, inculturation and contextualization. There is, therefore, the need to clarify why we have chosen the term 'contextualization' over the other terms.

[28] Gilles Routhier speaks of the close link between hermeneutics and reception [Routhier, 'La ricezione dell'ecclesiologia del Vaticano II: Problemi aperti' in Associazione Teologica Italiana, *La chiesa e il Vaticano II: Problemi di ermeneutica and ricezione conciliare* (Milano: Glossa, 2005), pp. 16-8]; *cf*. G. Calabrese, 'Chiesa come "popolo di Dio" o chiesa "comunione"?' in Associazione Teologica Italiana, *La chiesa e il Vaticano II*, p. 63; *cf*. S. Noceti, 'Pensare il post-concilio tra ricezione ed ermeneutica', *Ad Gentes*, 16 (2012), pp. 14-5.

[29] *cf*. section 2.5.

1.5.1 Hermeneutics of Vatican II

How do we interpret the teachings of Vatican II? And in the specific scope of this study, how do we interpret the ecclesiology of Vatican II? We agree with Giuseppe Ruggieri who contends that how one appraises the development of Vatican II largely determines one's interpretation of the council.[30] In this light there have been various ways of interpreting the teachings and for that matter the ecclesiology of Vatican II.[31] In the midst of this variety of interpretations, we find the hermeneutical guidelines of the 1985 Extraordinary Synod of Bishops (Rome),[32] as initially developed by Walter Kasper and further developed by Ormond Rush valuable for our study.[33] It is evident in what follows that Rush's principles of interpretation are based on a perspective of the development of Vatican II that is broader than that of the 1985 Synod and Kasper's.

Observing that the reception of Vatican II had not been appreciable twenty years after its closing, and that this was partly due to 'a partial and selective reading of the council, as well as a superficial interpretation of its doctrine in one sense or another',[34] the 1985 Synod recommended the following guidelines to aid better reception:

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[30] G. Ruggieri, 'Ricezione e interpretazioni del Vaticano II: Le ragioni di un dibattito' in Melloni et al (eds), *Chi ha paura del Vaticano II?*, p. 22.

[31] The interpretations of Vatican II could be categorized variously. For instance, Melloni categorizes them into three as follows: firstly, there is the *literal* interpretation; secondly, there is the interpretation according to the '*spirit*' of the council; and thirdly, there is the *augmentative* interpretation (Melloni, 'Breve guida ai giudizi sul Vaticano II', pp. 110-1). Komonchak in turn mentions three types of interpretations, though he categorizes them differently: '*Progressives* interpret it [Vatican II] as a good thing, the long-overdue accommodation of Catholicism to the modern world; *traditionalists* see it as a bad thing, the capitulation of Catholicism to principles and movements it had rightly resisted for 150 years. For both, the council was a watershed event. A third interpretation … "*reformist*," plays down the eventful character of the council as a break or rupture with tradition' (Komonchak, 'Vatican II as an "Event"', p. 29).

[32] O'Malley finds the hermeneutical 'norms' of the 1985 Synod still valid, while indicating that a norm that incorporates the 'discontinuity' of Vatican II with its past should be added (O'Malley, 'Vatican II: Did Anything Happen?', pp. 84-5).

[33] *cf*. Melloni, 'Breve guida ai giudizi sul Vaticano II', pp. 127-8; *cf*. Noceti, 'Pensare il post-concilio', p. 19.

[34] Second Extraordinary Synod, The Final Report of the 1985 Extraordinary Synod, I, 4, http://www.saint-mike.org/library/synod_bishops/final_report1985.html (accessed on 10 September 2013).

> The theological interpretation of the conciliar doctrine must show attention to all the documents, in themselves and in their close inter-relationship, in such a way that the integral meaning of the council's affirmations – often very complex – might be understood and expressed. Special attention must be paid to the four major constitutions of the council, which contain the interpretative key for the other decrees and declarations. It is not licit to separate the pastoral character from the doctrinal vigour of the documents. In the same way, it is not legitimate to separate the spirit and the letter of the council. Moreover, the council must be understood in continuity with the great tradition of the church, and at the same time we must receive light from the council's own doctrine for today's church and the men [and women] of our time. The church is one and the same throughout all the councils.[35]

Two years later, Kasper, who served as theologian-secretary to the 1985 Synod, would develop these guidelines into four principles of interpretation.[36] The first of these principles contrasts with the position of those scholars who seem to separate the 'spirit' and the 'letter' or the 'event' and the 'final decisions' of Vatican II.[37] For Kasper the so-called real or presumed 'spirit' of the council should not be separated from the 'letter' of the council; rather the spirit of the council should be derived from its history and its texts. In other words, the conciliar texts should be understood in the light of the history of Vatican II as well as of the often controversial discussions which occurred in the course of their development.[38] We concur with Kasper on this point, for separating the conciliar 'spirit' from the 'letter' may be likened to what results from separating the human soul from the body. Furthermore, as one cannot claim to interpret Scripture without the written letter (after all, Scripture means the *written* holy text), so one cannot claim to validly interpret Vatican II without due reference to its text.

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[35] Second Extraordinary Synod, The Final Report of the 1985 Extraordinary Synod, I, 5.
[36] W. Kasper, *Theology and Church* (New York: Crossroad, 1989), pp. 166-76; the original German edition is: Kasper, *Theologie und Kirche* (Mainz: Matthias-Grünewald, 1987).
[37] Ruggieri, 'Ricezione e interpretazioni del Vaticano II', p. 18; *cf*. Komonchak, 'Vatican II as an "Event"', pp. 24-51, esp. pp. 27-31, 35-9.
[38] Kasper, *Chiesa Cattolica*, p. 25; Kasper, *Theology and Church*, p. 172; G. Routhier, *Il concilio Vaticano II: Ricezione ed ermeneutica* (Milan: Vita e Pensiero, 2007), pp. 240-4; the original French edition is: Routhier, *Vatican II: Herméneutique et réception* (Québec : Fides, 2006); *cf*. A. Marchetto, *The Second Vatican Ecumenical Council: A Counterpoint for the History of the Council* (Chicago: Scranton, 2010), pp. 136, 443-4; the original Italian edition is: Marchetto, *Il Concilio Ecumenico Vaticano: Contrappunto per la sua storia* (Vatican: LEV, 2005); *cf*. O.H. Pesch, *Il concilio Vaticano secondo: Preistoria, svolgimento, risultati, storia post-conciliare* (Brescia: Queriniana, 2005), p. 379; *cf*. O'Malley, 'Vatican II: Did Anything Happen?', p. 81; *cf*. P. Hünermann, 'Il "testo": Un complemento all'ermeneutica del Vaticano II' in Melloni et al (eds), *Chi ha paura del Vaticano II?*, pp. 85-6; *cf*. O'Malley, 'Introduction', p. 21.

The second principle, according to Kasper, is the need to interpret every single conciliar formulation within the complex of all the conciliar texts, while keeping in mind the inherent hierarchy of the various conciliar documents (constitutions, decrees and declarations).[39] Gilles Routhier rightly finds some difficulty with this principle of 'totality' or 'integrality'. He observes that this principle supposes that one could consider the texts of Vatican II as a coherent whole, whereas they are actually sixteen different documents only connected by the fact that they have been collected in one volume.[40] Routhier's reason is that the method of work adopted at the council did not favour, at least at the beginning, the realization of a coherent work.[41] In this regard, one could suggest that the scope of coherency may be reduced in certain cases. For instance, the interpretation of the formulation (e.g. a paragraph) of a text should be done within the context of the whole document (e.g. *Unitatis redintegratio*)[42] concerned, as well as in relation to its hierarchically superior document (e.g. *Lumen gentium*).

Kasper gives the following as the third principle: the conciliar texts should be interpreted in the light of the biblical and patristic sources to which the council itself is connected, and from which it draws abundantly. The council, he continues to explain, should be seen, on the one hand, as the inheritor of tradition, and on the other hand as its authentic interpreter for a new situation.[43] This principle, together with the first one, is crucial in overcoming the sharp polarization between the hermeneutics of 'continuity' and

[39] Kasper, *Chiesa Cattolica*, p. 25; Kasper, *Theology and Church*, p. 172; *cf*. Theobald, *La ricezione del Vaticano II*, pp. 327-31; *cf*. O'Malley, 'Introduction', p. 7; *cf*. Noceti, 'Pensare il post-concilio', p. 20.
[40] We wish to nuance Routhier's point: though the documents have been joined together by the single magisterial act of an ecumenical council, the actual conciliar process over a span of 3 years (1962-1965) does not guarantee coherence in every case.
[41] Routhier, *Il concilio Vaticano II*, pp. 237-8. Ruggieri also makes a critical presentation on the principle of interpreting various conciliar documents in a coherent and organic manner. In the process he critiques the positons of G. Dossetti, C. Theobald, M. Fedou, P. Hünermann, J. O'Malley, O. Rush, among others (Ruggieri, 'Ricezione e interpretazioni del Vaticano II', pp. 30-41).
[42] Vatican II, *Decree on Ecumenism*, *Unitatis redintegratio*, 21 November 1964 (to be abbreviated as 'UR').
[43] Kasper, *Chiesa Cattolica*, p. 25; Kasper, *Theology and Church*, p. 172. *cf*. Routhier, *Il concilio Vaticano II,* pp. 244-7.

'discontinuity'.[44] We, therefore, do not share Ruggieri's view that Kasper advances only a principle of 'continuity'.[45] On the other hand, we find insightful Giacomo Canobbio's point that probably the polarization of 'continuity' and 'discontinuity' could be avoided if it is well appreciated that tradition is not a mere restatement or reproduction of the past nor a radical transformation; rather, it is a creative recovery of that which effectively belongs to the faith.[46] Finally, Kasper says that for an adequate conciliar hermeneutics it is important to keep in mind the reception which the conciliar affirmations have found in the doctrine and life of the church after the council.[47]

Rush, in an article to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the commencement of Vatican II, presents a set of six principles which we consider as an *aggiornamento* (updating) of the recommendations of the 1985 Synods, as well as of the hermeneutical principles enunciated by Kasper. Each of his six principles 'is formulated in terms of a dialectic, where the two terms of the dialectic are to be seen as mutually interpretative and existing in creative tension.'[48] The first principle of Rush, which is a dialectic between the council and its

[44] *cf*. Noceti, 'Pensare il post-concilio', p. 19.
[45] Ruggieri, 'Ricezione e interpretazioni del Vaticano II', pp. 17-8. Ruggieri sees Pope Benedict XVI as also holding the position of only 'continuity'. Here too we are of the opinion that Ruggieri seems to be misunderstanding the pope's position. For Benedict XVI affirms the need to keep a balance between continuity and discontinuity: 'It is precisely in [the] *combination of continuity and discontinuity* at different levels that the very nature of true reform consists. In this process of innovation in continuity we must learn to understand more practically than before that the church's decisions on contingent matters - for example, certain practical forms of liberalism or a free interpretation of the Bible - should necessarily be contingent themselves, precisely because they refer to a specific reality that is changeable in itself. It was necessary to learn to recognize that in these decisions it is only the principles that express the permanent aspect, since they remain as an undercurrent, motivating decisions from within. On the other hand, not so permanent are the practical forms that depend on the historical situation and are therefore subject to change' (*Address of His Holiness Benedict XVI to the Roman Curia, offering them his Christmas Greetings,* 22 December 2005, www.vatican.va/holy_father/ benedict xvi/ speeches/2005/december/documents [accessed on 16 October 2012]). For another critique of the pope's address on the interpretation of Vatican II, one could read, J. Komonchak, 'Benedetto XVI e l'interpretazione del Vaticano II' in Melloni et al (eds), *Chi ha paura del Vaticano II?*, pp. 69-84.
[46] G. Canobbio, 'L'attualità dell'ecclesiologia del Vaticano II e i limiti della sua ricezione', *Teologia*, 36 (2011), p. 188; *cf*. Ruggieri et al, 'Introduzione', p. 13; *cf*. O'Malley, 'Introduction', pp. 1-6; O'Malley, 'Vatican II: Did Anything Happen?', pp. 56-69.
[47] Kasper, *Chiesa Cattolica*, p. 25; Kasper, *Theology and Church*, pp. 172-3; *cf*. Komonchak, 'Vatican II as an "Event"', p. 41.
[48] O. Rush, 'Towards a Comprehensive Interpretation of the Council and its Documents', *Theological Studies*, 73 (2012), p. 548.

documents, implicitly takes into consideration Yves Congar's intuition that a council is more than its texts.[49] According to Rush, 'the documents of Vatican II must be interpreted in the light of the historical event (the council) that produced them; and the historical event must be interpreted in the light of the official documents that it promulgated'.[50] This principle which discourages the 'spirit' and 'letter' opposition is in line with Kasper's first principle.

Secondly, whereas both Kasper and Rush acknowledge the importance of the pastoral orientation of Vatican II,[51] only the latter enunciates it as a hermeneutical principle. Rush writes: 'the council and its documents are to be interpreted in the light of the council's primarily pastoral orientation; Vatican II's reformulation of doctrine aimed to teach in words and actions that foster a more meaningful spiritual appropriation of God's salvation and revelation by the people of God.'[52]

Rush's third principle is a dialectic between proclamation and dialogue. He states it as follows: 'The church's mission is to proclaim boldly and steadfastly God's loving offer of salvation to humanity in Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit; proclamation of the Christian gospel will be ineffective without dialogic openness to the perspectives and

[49] Y. Congar, *Le concile de Vatican II: Son Église peuple de Dieu et corps du Christ* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1984), p. 53, cited in Routhier, 'La ricezione dell'ecclesiologia del Vaticano II', p. 19. Routhier takes Congar's intuition a step further, by saying that a council is not only more than its texts, it is more than its history as well. Whereas Routhier makes this statement in the context of elaborating on Vatican II as an event, we see the second to sixth principles of Rush as responding to Routhier's statement from other perspectives.
[50] Rush, 'Towards a Comprehensive Interpretation', pp. 548-53. He explains that here he uses the term *event* 'in a broad sense, referring simply to all the elements that made up "the council" from its being announced by Pope John XXIII on 25 January 1959, to the closing mass on 8 December 1965': see footnote 4 of p. 548 of his article.
[51] Kasper, *Theology and Church*, pp. 173-5. For John XXIII, the pastoral character of doctrine meant bringing the Gospel and its teachings close to the ears and hearts of men and women (Ruggieri et al, 'Introduzione', p. 13).
[52] Rush, 'Towards a Comprehensive Interpretation', pp. 553-5.

contexts of the intended receivers of the proclamation, whether they be believers or nonbelievers.'[53] This principle is not explicitly enunciated by Kasper.

The dialectic between *ressourcement* (returning to the sources) and *aggiornamento* (updating) serves as Rush's fourth principle: 'Vatican II sought renewal and reform of the church by re-receiving many of the past forms and practices of the tradition; applications of these past forms and practices to the present, however, demands critical adaptation for the new times and contexts if genuine renewal and reform are to take place.'[54] This principle is similar to the third principle of Kasper.

As we saw above, from the first and third principles of Kasper, it could be deduced that Vatican II should be interpreted in terms of both continuity and discontinuity. This dialectic between continuity and reform forms Rush's fifth principle: 'The church is the one community of faith through time as a sacrament of God's offer of salvation; the form this sacrament takes in a particular time and place requires continual reform and must always be adapted to that context for the sake of the church's ongoing effectiveness.'[55]

Finally, whereas Kasper speaks of only a principle of reception, Rush advances a dialectic principle of both vision and reception: 'The bishops of Vatican II proposed a vision for renewing and reforming the Catholic Church; that vision requires ongoing reception and implementation by the whole people of God for its realization.'[56] These six principles of Rush serve as guidelines for our interpretation and presentation of the ecclesiology of Vatican II as well as of its reception.

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[53] Rush, 'Towards a Comprehensive Interpretation', pp. 555-7.
[54] Rush, 'Towards a Comprehensive Interpretation', pp. 557-61; *cf.* O'Malley, 'Vatican II: Did Anything Happen?', pp. 63-4, 80; *cf.* O'Malley, '*Ressourcement* e riforma al Vaticano II', *Concilium*, 48 (2012), pp. 61-71.
[55] Rush, 'Towards a Comprehensive Interpretation', pp. 561-4.
[56] Rush, 'Towards a Comprehensive Interpretation', pp. 564-7.

1.5.2 Defining the Church?

Can the church as a mystery be defined or not? This triggers a more preliminary question: what is a definition in this regard? To answer the latter question, some theologians make a distinction between nominal and real definitions. 'A nominal definition is concerned with words, and its purpose is to settle or to state the meaning of words.'[57] This is, however, not the preoccupation of theologians as far the mystery of the church is concerned; they are rather concerned about its real definition. Some theologians think there can be a real definition of the church, while others hold a contrary view. Let us begin with Herwi Rikhof, a key post-conciliar proponent of the position that the church can have a real definition. Rikhof gives five characteristics of real definitions. In the first place he says that:

> Real definitions can be understood as answers to 'what is …' questions.… If real definitions are understood as stating what makes something what it is, the definitions neither state, nor report, nor establish something completely independent of human structuring, but state how language is used to structure reality. In other words, real definitions give an answer to what-is question by stating the defining characteristics.[58]

Secondly, 'a real definition can state a key-element which structures the whole and from which other elements follow'. Thirdly, a real definition 'can present a rejection or recommendation of a certain idea'; he refers to this as 'persuasive definition'. Fourthly, 'a real definition can point to the cause or the conditions of something'. Fifthly, he says that a real 'definition can give some kind of analysis' of the reality. He then sums up that a real definition 'can be one of these activities, but quite often such a definition is a mixture of more than one of them'.[59]

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[57] H. Rikhof, *The Concept of Church: A Methodological Enquiry into the Use of Metaphors in Ecclesiology* (London: Sheed & Ward, 1981), p. 206.
[58] Rikhof, *The Concept of Church*, p. 211.
[59] Rikhof, *The Concept of Church*, pp. 211-3.

Applying a combination of his first two characterizations of a real definition to the mystery of the church, Rikhof defines the church as follows: 'the church is the *communio* of the faithful'. Then, in the very last paragraph of the concluding chapter of his monograph, he writes that this definition 'can stand as the central statement in ecclesiology. With the help of this *terminus*, this basic statement, the richness of religious metaphors and of biblical and other insights can be made fruitful, and the opportunities created by Vatican II can be used to develop a truly theological vision of the church.'[60]

Though we agree with Rikhof that 'the church is the *communio* of the faithful' is a central statement in ecclesiology, and therefore a key idea for articulating a sound ecclesiology, we are of the opinion that this statement alone cannot be the real definition of the complex reality of the church. We, therefore, now turn to those theologians who say that the mystery of the church eludes any univocal definition.[61] We share in the position of this second group of theologians. Among them, we wish to focus on the thoughts of Yves Congar and Avery Dulles.

For Congar, one cannot obtain a real definition of the church using the rules of formal logic. The first reason he gives to support his position is that 'the reality we now call church is too rich to be captured by one name'. Secondly, he says that the church is not just a human, social reality with some Christian addition, the species of 'supernatural' of the genus 'society', but a substantially supernatural reality.[62] Dulles holds a view similar to that of Congar. According to the former, the classical way to define a thing is to put it into a category of familiar objects and then list the distinguishing characteristics that differentiate

[60] Rikhof, *The Concept of Church*, p. 236.
[61] Some of these theologians are: M. Schmaus, *Dogma 4: The Church* (Kansas City: Sheed & Ward, 1972); F. Holböck, 'Das Mysterium der Kirche in dogmatischer Sicht' in F. Holböck & T. Sartory (eds), *Mysterium Kirche in der Sicht de theologischen Disziplinen*, vol. 1 (Salzburg: O. Muller, 1962), pp. 201-346; O. Semmerlroth, *Die Kirche als Ursakrament* (Frankfurt-am-Main: Knecht, 1953).
[62] Y. Congar, *Sainte Église: Etudes et approches ecclésiologiques* (Paris: Cerf, 1963), p. 42, cited in Rikhof, *The Concept of Church*, p. 206.

it from other members of the same category. Such definitions or clear and univocal concepts apply only to physical (visible) realities, and cannot be applied to the mystery of the church. He continues: mysteries are realities of which we cannot speak directly. To talk about them 'we must draw on analogies afforded by our experience of the world. These analogies provide models. By attending to the analogies and utilizing them as models, we can indirectly grow in our understanding of the church.'[63]

1.5.3 The Use of Models in Ecclesiology

The term 'model', as employed by ecclesiologists, is connected with and yet distinct from terms like 'image', 'symbol' and 'metaphor'. There is, therefore, the need to clarify these terms lest we become deaf to a good caution given by Rikhof. He says that 'most theologians do not explicitly discuss the nature of terms like "body of Christ" and "people of God" when applied to the church, do not argue for any qualification but simply call them "metaphor", "concept" or something else, and do not develop systematically their ideas about what can and what cannot be done with these terms.'[64]

Let us begin with the first two terms. An image, according to Sandra Mazzolini, is the representation of an object or human action; whereas a symbol is an image that represents something that transcends its literal meaning. Thus, by implication, a symbol is more loaded with meaning than the mere representation of the image. The distinction between the two notions, however, does not necessarily mean a separation.[65] This is clear from Bernard Lonergan's brief definition of a symbol: 'A symbol is an image of a real or imaginary object that evokes a feeling or is evoked by a feeling.'[66] Lonergan introduces

[63] Dulles, *Models of the Church* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1974), pp. 13-4.
[64] Rikhof, *The Concept of Church*, p. 60.
[65] S. Mazzolini, 'Immagini' in G. Calabrese, P. Goyret & O.F. Piazza (eds), *Dizionario di ecclesiologia* (Roma: Città Nuova, 2010), p. 692.
[66] B. Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 2007), p. 64; this is a reprint of the 1979 Seabury paperback edition.

some two elements: first, that the object concerned could be 'imaginary'; and the second is about the evocation of a feeling. In view of the second element, where images act as symbols in religion they have a special appeal to believers. Dulles explains:

> In the religious sphere, images function as symbols. That is to say, they speak to [a person] existentially and find echo in the inarticulate depths of his [/her] psyche. Such images communicate through their evocative power. They convey a latent meaning that is apprehended in a non-conceptual, even a subliminal, way. Symbols transform the horizons of [a person's] life, integrate his [/her] perception of reality, alter his [/her] scale of values, re-orient his [/her] loyalties, attachments, and aspirations in a manner far exceeding the powers of abstract conceptual thought.[67]

The third term under consideration is 'metaphor'. A metaphor, like a symbol, has a meaning which transcends the mere representation of an image. However, it is different from a symbol, as could be seen from its characteristic features and function. Rikhof, who critically reviews several works on metaphors, presents four characteristic features of metaphors.[68] Firstly, contrary to Aristotle who conceived a metaphor as a word,[69] Rikhof says that 'a metaphor is not a word but a combination of (at least) two words: it is an expression or a sentence.'[70] Secondly, according to Rikhof, the words in the sentence 'have retained their normal, usual meaning, but are used in a special way, and [they] form an extraordinary combination.'[71] For instance, the expression, 'body of Christ', is an extraordinary combination of words and any rearrangement of the words (e.g. 'Christ of body') would be meaningless or would, at least, have a different meaning. Thirdly, 'only on the level of a sentence can one talk about the use of words, and only on the level of a sentence can one talk about the metaphorical use of words.'[72] Fourthly, 'a theory of

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[67] Dulles, *Models of the Church* (1987), p. 20; *cf.* S. Dianich & S. Noceti, *Trattato sulla chiesa* (Brescia: Queriniana, 2005), p. 154.
[68] Paul Ricoeur had preceded Herwi Rikhof in critiquing Aristotle's position and enunciating these characteristic features of metaphors [Ricoeur, *La métaphore vive* (Paris: Seuil, 1975), pp. 13-51, 87-100].
[69] Rikhof, *The Concept of Church*, pp. 93-4. He refers to Aristotle, *De Poetica*, 1457b 6-9; Aristotle, *Ars Rhetorica*, Book III.
[70] Rikhof, *The Concept of Church*, p. 69.
[71] Rikhof, *The Concept of Church*, pp. 69, 120-1.
[72] Rikhof, *The Concept of Church*, pp. 69-70.

metaphor should explain the metaphorical use of language, and not metaphorical sense of words.'[73]

Furthermore, according to Rikhof, in the metaphorical use of language, there is 'an extraordinary combination of sets of concepts, of conceptual realms'; and this allows 'for another organization of reality'.[74] For Paul Ricoeur, this means that a metaphor allows for a 're-description of reality'.[75] This position of Ricoeur on the function of a metaphor, however, needs to be nuanced. This is because a metaphor does not involve a *change* of the rules governing the sets of concepts or conceptual realms but only a *relaxation* of these rules for this particular occasion. Therefore, Rikhof, who makes the above observation, states that it is more precise to refer to the function of a metaphor as 'a proposal or suggestion of such a re-description.'[76]

The fourth term 'model' also has a relation with an image. There are, however, different senses in which theologians employ the term 'model' in ecclesiology. Some may use it with the intention of proposing, as a point of departure, an ideal model of the church that is to be realized, and in whose realization the ecclesiological theory being constructed should function. Other theologians use the term 'model' to categorize *post factum* the various types of ecclesiologies in history that can be found in theological literature; in this sense, the term 'model' may only serve to indicate a complex interpretative system, that is the result and not the beginning of a hermeneutical operation. After identifying the above two different senses of the use of models, Severino Dianich and Serena Noceti state that they prefer to use models in another sense. They see models as typical heuristic function, from which one analyses that which he/she could obtain from the interpretative process of

[73] Rikhof, *The Concept of Church*, p. 70.
[74] Rikhof, *The Concept of Church*, p. 84.
[75] Ricoeur, *La métaphore vive*, p. 399; Rikhof, *The Concept of Church*, p. 84
[76] Rikhof, *The Concept of Church*, pp. 84, 114.

all the reality of the church. They do this aware that the church is a greater and more complex reality than the content of the model.[77]

Dulles, whose models-method we are adopting for this study, is a major protagonist for the use of models in contemporary theology and ecclesiology in particular.[78] His use of models seems to be a blend or hybrid of the second and third senses mentioned by Dianich and Noceti.[79] Dulles explains the relationship and distinction between 'model' and 'image':

> Theology itself depends heavily on images. For theology, however, the unanalysed image is of very limited value. The theologian is not primarily concerned, as the preacher is, with the question whether a given image is readily available and meaningful to the ordinary Christian in the pews.... When the theologian uses images he does so for the purpose of gaining understanding of the mysteries of faith…. He knows that images are useful to a point, and that beyond that point they can become deceptive. Thus he employs images in a reflective, discriminative way. When he hears the church called the flock of Christ, he is aware that certain things follow and others do not.… For instance … it does not follow that the members of the church grow wool.… When an image is employed reflectively and critically to deepen one's theoretical understanding of a reality it becomes what is today called a 'model.'[80]

In other words, Dulles holds that a model 'is a relatively artificially constructed case which is found to be useful and illuminating for dealing with realities that are more complex and differentiated.'[81] He explains his thoughts further in another place: a model is

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[77] Dianich et al, *Trattato sulla chiesa*, p.157

[78] Dulles claims that his use of models in theology was inspired by the use of 'typology' by H. Richard Niebuhr in his work, *Christ and Culture* (1951). He finds Niebuhr's five typical visions of the relationship between Christ and human culture exceptionally stimulating and helpful. Moreover, he recognizes that the use of 'types' or images in theology has biblical and patristic roots. For the modern era, he mentions the significance of the work of Paul Minear – *Images of the Church in the New Testament* (1960). And in the specific area of the use of 'models', he acknowledges the works of some predecessors: Max Black, *Models and Metaphors* (1962), Ian T. Ramsey, *Models and Mystery* (1964), and Ewert Cousins, 'Models and the Future of Theology', *Continuum*, 7 (1969) [Dulles, *Models of the Church* (1987), pp. 11, 18-29; see also endnote nos. 6, 11, 13-5 related to these pages; *cf*. Dulles, *The Craft of Theology: From Symbol to System* (New York: Crossroad, 1995), pp. 46-8; *cf*. W. Brueggemann, 'Rethinking Church Models Through Scripture', *Theology Today*, 48 (1991), pp. 128-9].

[79] In his work on 'questions and method' in ecclesiology, Dianich finds Dulles' use of models-method in ecclesiology as a very satisfactory *heuristic* instrument [Dianich, *Ecclesiologia: questioni, metodo e una proposta*, (Cinisello Balsamo: Paoline, 1993), p. 88]. However, by deducing his first five models from various existing theologies of the church, one could say that Dulles' use of models has as well some elements of the second sense of a model as presented by Dianich and Noceti.

[80] Dulles, *Models of the Church* (1987), pp. 22-3. There is also a difference between metaphor and model. One may read further on this in Rikhof, *The Concept of Church*, pp. 150-63, esp. pp. 150-3, where he reviews the positions of Black and others.

[81] Dulles, *Models of Revelation* (New York: Orbis, 1992), p. 30.

> a schematic construction that enables one to make statements potentially applicable to an indefinite number of individuals. Just as the tailor's dummy is a help for producing clothes that can easily be adjusted to different individuals, so the theologian's model can be helpful for speaking about classes of theologians, even though every individual will have distinguishing characteristics.[82]

Furthermore, Dulles observes that while some models can be readily imagined (e.g. temple, flock), other models are of a more abstract nature (e.g. institution, society). [83] In addition, as in the physical and social sciences, Dulles divides the use of models in theology into two: the *explanatory* and *exploratory* types. In the first type, models serve to synthesize what we already know or at least are inclined to believe. A model is then accepted if it accounts for a large number of biblical and traditional data and accords with what history and experience tell us about the Christian life. In the exploratory type, models could lead to new theological insights. This role is, however, harder to identify because theology is not an experimental science in the same way as, for instance, physics is.[84]

Dulles makes another distinction: theological models are not scale reproductions. They may be referred to as 'analogue models' or 'disclosure models'. Models are necessarily inadequate, because their correspondence with the mystery of the church is only partial and functional. They illumine certain phenomena but not others. Therefore, pursued alone, any single model will lead to distortions. It will misplace the accent, and thus entail consequences that are not valid. In order to offset the defects of individual models, the theologian, like the physicist, employs a combination of 'irreducibly distinct models'. Phenomena not intelligible in terms of one model may be readily explicable when another model is used.[85]

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[82] Dulles, *The Craft of Theology*, p. 47.
[83] Dulles, *Models of the Church* (1987), p. 24.
[84] Dulles, *Models of the Church* (1987), pp. 24-5; *cf.* Dulles, *Models of Revelation*, p. 31.
[85] Dulles, *Models of the Church* (1987), pp. 28-9; *cf.* Dulles, *Models of Revelation*, pp. 31-2, 34-5; *cf.* N. Doerr, 'An Evaluation of Avery Dulles' Models of the Church', pp. 1, 4-5, http://ndoerr.files.wordpress.com/

A model becomes a 'paradigm' when it has proved successful in solving a great variety of problems and is expected to be an appropriate tool for unravelling anomalies as yet unsolved. In short, a paradigm is a dominant model. But not even a paradigm should be idolized.[86] Dulles, therefore, holds that several models should be taken simultaneously together in the understanding process.[87] Attempting a kind of comparative ecclesiology, Dulles, initially sifts five main models from both Catholic and Protestant theologies: the church as institution, as mystical communion, as sacrament, as herald, and as servant.[88] Later on, he adds a sixth model: the church as community of disciples.

The use of models in ecclesiology, however, is not without criticisms. Here we focus on the criticisms of Rikhof and the Spanish Bishops' Conference.[89] Let us begin with the criticisms of Rikhof. He asks if those theologians who claim that the church cannot be defined because it is mystery mean to say that the word 'church' is meaningless.[90] Dulles, however, does not simply say that the church cannot be 'defined'; rather what he means is that it cannot be defined exactly in the univocal manner we define physical or purely visible objects. And so it could be comprehended by the use of another method of 'definition' (description) – by the use of analogy, as in models.

Secondly, Dulles traces the origin of his use of models to the use of images in Scripture and tradition of the church.[91] On the other hand, Rikhof argues against the broadening of the notion of models to include biblical images. He does this on the basis of

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2010/10/models-of-the-church.doc (accessed on 1 December 2011); published by Kenrick-Glennon Seminary, 26 October 2010.
[86] Dulles, *Models of the Church* (1987), pp. 28-9.
[87] *cf.* Routhier, *Il concilio Vaticano II*, p. 112.
[88] Dulles, *Models of the Church* (1974), pp. 13-4.
[89] Other critiques of Dulles' method have been considered in section 3.8.
[90] Rikhof, *The Concept of Church*, pp. 215-20.
[91] *cf.* footnote no. 78.

a distinction he makes between *religious language* (in which images are appropriately used) and *theological language* (which is systematic and cognitive):[92]

> Religious language is the everyday language of Scripture, prayer, sermons, catechesis, etc., while theological language is a technical language, developed and used by theologians for their scholarly, systematic, and methodical work. As in the case of ordinary language and (any) technical language, this distinction between religious and theological language implies neither a complete separation nor an exclusive one-way relation between the two. A failure, though, to distinguish the two can lead to dangerous confusions, certainly if the same words are used in both types of languages.[93]

In this regard, we would agree with Rikhof if he means that a biblical image in its 'crude form' may not be utilized as a model. On the other hand we don't seem to see how his criticism applies to Dulles who is aware of limitations of images and so employs them 'reflectively and critically'.

Thirdly, for Rikhof, even if models have to be employed in theology,[94] he sees them as necessarily mutually exclusive. Consequently, he does not share Dulles' position on the use of several complementary models.[95] We, on the other hand, concur with Dulles on the use of multiple complementary models; for the models-approach is being utilized for the very reason that a single idea is far inadequate in capturing the complexity of the mystery of the church.[96]

Now let us consider the concerns which the Spanish Bishops' Conference raised against the use of the expression 'models of the church' in a pastoral letter they issued in 1988.[97] We hereby summarize these concerns and see whether they apply to Dulles or not.

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[92] Rikhof, *The Concept of Church*, pp. 165-7. *cf*. E. Tengan, *House of God: Church-as-Family from an African Perspective* (Leuven: Acco, 1997), pp. 17-8.
[93] Rikhof, *The Concept of Church*, p. 165.
[94] Rikhof, *The Concept of Church*, p. 167.
[95] Rikhof, *The Concept of Church*, pp. 64, 219, 221. *cf*. Tengan, *House of God*, p.18.
[96] *cf*. Dianich, *Ecclesiologia: Questioni di metodo*, pp. 72-3.
[97] Episcopato Spagnolo, 'Circa gli usi inadeguati dell'espressione modelli di chiesa' in *Lettere Pastorali 1988-1989* (Verona: 1991), col. 271-80. This pastoral letter is dated 18 October 1988. In a dissertation written a decade ago, Joji Kallingal rightly observes that though the Spanish bishops do not explicitly identify the theologians who have made *inadequate* usage of the expression, 'models of the church', they do indicate in a footnote that A. Dulles, J. Ratzinger, G. Greshake, R. Aubert, L.A. Schökel, H. Küng and H. Fries as

In the first place, the Spanish bishops said that there is a danger of arbitrarily choosing and absolutizing a single model, and justifying it in the light of Scriptures and documents of Vatican II.[98] This danger, we agree with Joji Kallingal, does not apply to Dulles, who clearly states that there is no single supermodel as each model illuminates only an aspect of the complex mystery of the church. Besides, in reality, Dulles employs not only one but six models.[99] Secondly, the Spanish bishops cautioned against another extreme use of the models' approach; that is, the danger of reducing ecclesiology to simply a panorama of unrelated or worse still mutually contradictory models. Related to this, the Spanish bishops cautioned against the biblical justification of ecclesiological relativism, as well as the possible tendency to consider the teachings of Vatican II as a kind of unintegrated collection of ecclesiological positions.[100] In response to these cautions of the Spanish bishops, we share the position of Kallingal that though Dulles presents a multiple of models, he articulates them as complementary and not as unrelated – and certainly they are in no way presented as mutually contradictory. Thus, Dulles does not articulate an ecclesiological relativism.[101]

A final point of concern of the Spanish bishops is that the use of socio-political models for describing the church could lead to the neglect of her peculiar nature as a spiritual community and institution founded by Christ.[102] Once again, we agree with Kallingal that Dulles' work does not fall into this pitfall. This is because of the seven criteria that Dulles employs to assess the viability of each of his models: the basis of a model in Scripture, its basis in Christian tradition, its capacity to give church members a

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theologians who have made use of models in one context or another (footnote 1 on col. 279) [Kallingal, 'The Models Ecclesiology of Avery Cardinal Dulles in the Light of Vatican II', Ph.D. thesis extract (Pontifical Gregorian University, Rome 2004), p. 17].

[98] Episcopato Spagnolo, 'Circa gli usi inadeguati', col. 272. This point could be rather a critique of the Rikhof's last point (mentioned above).

[99] Kallingal, 'The Models Ecclesiology', pp. 18-9, 22.

[100] Episcopato Spagnolo, 'Circa gli usi inadeguati', col. 272-3, 276.

[101] Kallingal, 'The Models Ecclesiology', pp. 22-3.

[102] Episcopato Spagnolo, 'Circa gli usi inadeguati', col. 272.

sense of corporate identity and mission, its tendency to foster the authentic Christian virtues and values, its correspondence with the religious experience of men and women today, its theological fruitfulness, and its fruitfulness in enabling church members to relate successfully to those outside their own group.[103]

Therefore, despite the objections raised by Rikhof, the Spanish Bishops' Conference and others, we are convinced of the continuous usefulness of the multi-models approach as employed by Dulles. Besides Dulles himself,[104] this position is supported by other theologians. First, in an article entitled 'The Theological Model's Approach: Its Relevance Today', James H. Kroeger, referring to Dulles' use of models to analyse John Paul II's ecclesiology, affirms that Dulles' approach is still relevant:

> One may validly conclude that when an eminent [Catholic] ecclesiologist chooses to frame the extensive theology of the current pope within a models' approach, he is convinced of the validity and utility of this particular theological method. Models of theology as a serviceable method probably needs no further justification; what remains undone is the clear communication of its usefulness (strengths and weaknesses) as a methodological approach within theology.[105]

In considering the usefulness of the models-approach, Kroeger gives us at least three advantages or strengths. Firstly, he says, the greatest contribution of the models' approach within theology is probably 'the clarity of thought and communication that it promotes.' Secondly, he says, 'seeing the unique emphases and insights of each model is crucial; having several models interact and mutually reinforce each other brings integration of thought and vision while keeping all models within the total area of study (e.g. church, kingdom) brings richness to theological investigation.' Thirdly, he says, 'this method of

[103] Dulles, *Models of the Church* (1987), pp. 191-4; Kallingal, 'The Models Ecclesiology', pp. 23-5.
[104] In a work written after the second edition of his *Models of the Church* (1987), Dulles mentions some objections raised against the use of models, and then he goes on to effectively argue against them (Dulles, *The Craft of Theology*, pp. 50-2).
[105] J.H. Kroeger, 'The Theological Model's Approach: Its Relevance Today', *AFER*, 43 (2001), p. 95; Kroeger made use of Dulles' article, 'The Ecclesiology of John Paul II' in *Origins* 44 (1999), pp. 756-63. We have access to the version published in the third edition of *Models of the Church* (New York: Doubleday, 2002), pp. 219-40.

integrating theology moves easily across historical and cultural divergences of the theologizing enterprise.'[106]

To the above advantages, two more could be added from the works of Anne-Marie Kirmse, Joseph Komonchak, and Mark S. Massa, among others. The fact that this method encourages 'modesty for any one approach to explaining the great mystery at the heart of the Christian gospel' could be seen as a fourth advantage. The fifth advantage is that this method has 'promoted mutual understanding and communication among theologians who saw things differently – at least if the proponents of all the models recognized that no single theological approach could exhaust the truth of divine revelation.' [107]

However, no human method, theological or otherwise, is foolproof. Hence, Kroeger rightly cautions: 'The totality of Christian truth and faith will never be completely expressed theologically – even with several models or many theological methodologies. God – Christ – church – kingdom remain mysteries, with all their revealed intelligibility and limited human comprehension.'[108] We, therefore, further agree with Kroeger that where appropriate, the models-method should be complemented and enriched with other materials and methods.[109]

Finally, our position of adopting the models-method of Dulles is further strengthened by the fact that since the first edition of his classic was published, many theologians and other scholars have followed suit in the use of models in theology and

[106] Kroeger, 'The Theological Model's Approach', p. 94.
[107] M. Massa, 'Avery Dulles, Teaching Authority in the Church, and the "Dialectically Tense" Middle: An American Strategic Theology', *The Heythrop Journal*, 48 (2007), p. 933; A.-M. Kirmse, 'The Church and the Churches: A Study of the Ecclesiological and Ecumenical Developments in the Writings of Avery Dulles, S.J.', Ph.D. thesis (Fordham University, New York 1989), pp. 10, 23, 251; J. Komonchak, 'All Dressed in Scarlet: Avery Dulles Goes to College', *Commonweal* (23 February 2001), p. 9, http://www.thefreelibrary.com/ALL+DRESSED+IN+SCARLET+%3A+Avery+Dulles+goes+to+college.-a071578872 (accessed on 15 February 2012).
[108] Kroeger, 'The Theological Model's Approach', p. 94.
[109] Kroeger, 'The Theological Model's Approach', p. 87.

religion in general. John Fuellenbach attests that since Dulles published his book, *Models of the Church,* 'in 1974, many other scholars have followed in approaching theological topics with the hermeneutical tool of models.'[110] Kroeger also concurs with Fuellenbach by saying that Dulles' book has made a wide influence on many areas of theology, religious education, and pastoral practice: the usefulness of the tool of models is probably evident in the fact that besides Dulles employing it to write another book, *Models of Revelation*, others have also used it. Kroeger mentions the following publications: '*Models of God* (S. McFafue), *Models of Jesus* (J. O'Grady), *Models of the Kingdom* (H. Synder), *Models of Theological Reflection* (R. Collins), *Models of Holiness* (C. Duqoc & C. Floristan), *and Models of Contextual Theology* (S. Bevans)'.[111] And writing almost a decade after Kroeger, Eric A. Schneider also affirms the continuous relevance of the method of Dulles: 'when Avery Cardinal Dulles wrote his influential book, *Models of the Church*, in 1974, the effects it would have on ecclesiology in scholarly as well as pedestrian circles could not be predicted.'[112]

In the specific field of ecclesiology, we can mention John Fuellenbach, Jerome P. Theisen, Richard P. McBrien, Pius Benson, Joji Kallingal and Cornelius Hankomoone as theologians who also use the tool of models.[113] Following Dulles and such theologians in using complementary multi-models, we may be able to present a systematic articulation which accounts well for the multi-faceted nature of the 'mosaic' ecclesiology of Vatican

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[110] J. Fuellenbach, *The Kingdom of God: The Message of Jesus Today* (New York: Orbis, 1995), p. 61; Fuellenbach, *Church: Community for the Kingdom* (New York: Orbis, 2002), p. 109.
[111] Kroeger, 'The Theological Model's Approach', pp.86-7.
[112] E.A. Schneider, 'Models of the Church: A Contemporary Appreciation', p. 1, http://superflumina.files.wordpress.com/2010/10/models-of-the-church.doc (accessed on 1 December 2011); published by Kenrick-Glennon Seminary, 8 October 2010; *cf*. G. Siniscalchi, 'Conciliar Rhetoric: An Integrated Model of Catholic Defense', *The Heythrop Journal*, 52 (2011), p.1.
[113] Fuellenbach, *Church: Community for the Kingdom*, pp. 108-66; P. Benson, *The Church in the Theological Writings of Avery Dulles: Impulses for African Ecclesiology* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2007); C. Hankomoone, 'Church as Family of God: An African Expression of Ecclesial Communion and Mission', Ph.D. thesis (Pontificia Universitas Gregoriana, Roma 2009); his chapter 5 is on 'Church as Family in the Light of Avery Dulles' Models of the Church'.

II.[114] At the same time, we may be able to avoid some of the inadequacies associated with focusing on only one metaphor ('people of God') or model (e.g. 'church as sacrament', or 'church as communion'),[115] or even a combination of only two models (e.g. 'church as sacrament of communion').[116]

1.5.4 Primacy of the Communion Model of the Church

While one has to work with several complementary models of the church, Dulles says that he/she needs to identify the primary model around which to construct a systematic ecclesiology.[117] As mentioned already (*cf*. section 1.1), we concur with those theologians who consider 'church as communion' as the primary model of Vatican II.[118] We however begin by acknowledging the fact that, unlike the institutional model (LG chapter 3), no chapter in the conciliar documents is allotted to the model of communion; and less still, unlike the institutional model (*Christus Dominus*, *Presbyterorum ordinis*),[119] herald model

[114] Other theologians speak of the multi-faceted nature of the ecclesiology of Vatican II (Routhier, *Il concilio Vaticano II*, pp. 106-13; Routhier, 'La ricezione dell'ecclesiologia del Vaticano II: Problemi aperti', p. 4; Canobbio, 'L'attualità dell'ecclesiologia del Vaticano II', pp. 173-82).

[115] *cf.* D. Manastireanu, 'Models of the Church', *Studia Theologica*, 58 (2004), pp. 189-90.

[116] E. Ancilli and A. Acerbi, for instance, present two models: E. Ancilli, 'La chiesa sacramento di comunione' in E. Ancilli (ed.), *La chiesa sacramento di comunione* (Roma: Teresianum, 1979), pp. 7-32; A. Acerbi, *Due ecclesiologia: ecclesiologia giuridica ed ecclesiologia di comunione nella 'Lumen gentium'* (Bologna: Dehoniane, 1975). Dulles, however, acknowledges that some theologians present more than two models [Dulles*, Models of the Church* (1987), pp. 204-5].

[117] While it may be feasible to systematize the ecclesiology of Vatican II without working with a key or primary idea (*cf*. Canobbio, 'L'attualità dell'ecclesiologia del Vaticano II', pp. 173-82), we wish to make use of a primary model since this is the approach of Dulles (whose method we are adopting). By adopting Dulles' approach we avoid the pitfall that Routhier cautions against: the tendency to consider 'church as communion' without sufficient consideration of other conciliar perspectives (Routhier, *Il concilio Vaticano II*, p.111; *cf.* Calabrese, 'Chiesa come "popolo di Dio" o chiesa "comunione"?', pp. 102-8).

[118] *cf*. Theobald, *La ricezione del Vaticano II,* pp. 396-7, 474. As shown in chapter two of this study, at various periods in the post-conciliar times other models (e.g. 'church as sacrament') and other metaphors (e.g. 'people of God') were dominant in Catholic ecclesiology. Even after the 1985 Synod of Bishops, some theologians have held 'church as sacrament' [e.g. S. Pié-Ninot, *Ecclesiologia: La sacramentalità della comunità cristiana* (Brescia: Queriniana, 2008), especially pp. 184-224; Pié-Ninot, 'Sacramentalità' in G. Calabrese, P. Goyret & O.F. Pizza (eds), *Dizionario di ecclesiologia* (Roma: Città Nuova, 2010), pp. 1242-55] or 'church as people of God' [e.g. G. Colombo, 'Il "popolo di Dio" e il "mistero" della chiesa nella ecclesiologia postconciliare", *Teologia*, 10 (1985), pp. 97-169] as the key idea in their schemes of ecclesiology.

[119] Vatican II, *Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church, Christus Dominus*, 28 October 1965 (to be abbreviated as 'CD'); and *Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests, Presbyterorum ordinis*, 7 December 1965 (to be abbreviated as 'PO').

(*Dei verbum*, *Ad gentes*),[120] and servant model (*Gaudium et spes*),[121] no specific document is dedicated to 'communion'. On the other hand, like the models of herald, institution, servant and sacrament, the model of 'communion' is mentioned in several places in *Lumen gentium* (LG 4, 7-9, 21-22, 47-49) and in other conciliar documents (GS 12, 32, 89; UR 2, 3, 4, 13, 20, 22; AG 2, 4, 19; CD 5).[122] And more than these models, it is the 'communion' ecclesiology which pervades or permeates the whole ecclesiology of Vatican II.[123]

This could be seen from the fact that more than any other conciliar model, it is the communion model which encompasses the three major and complementary metaphors 'people of God', 'body of Christ' and 'temple of the Spirit' (*cf*. LG 17).[124] And by so doing the communion model seems to be the most expressive of the trinitarian (LG 2, 4),[125] *theo*-logical, christological (LG 6, 7), and pneumatological (LG 4, 9) features of the church.[126] For *Lumen gentium,* God's plan of salvation is *communio* in nature: 'God … does not make men [and women] holy and save them merely as individuals, without bond or link between one another. Rather has it pleased him to bring men [and women] together as *one people*…

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[120] Vatican II, *Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, Dei verbum*, 18 November 1965 (to be abbreviated as 'DV'); and *Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity*, *Ad gentes*, 7 December 1965 (to be abbreviated 'AG').

[121] Vatican II, *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World*, *Gaudium et spes*, 7 December 1965 (to be abbreviated as 'GS').

[122] Routhier observes that the term 'communion' occurs 111 times in the documents of Vatican II, most frequently in the following: *Unitatis redintegratio* (28 times), *Lumen gentium* (25 times), *Gaudium et spes* (11 times) and *Ad gentes* (11 times) [Routhier, *Il concilio Vaticano II*, p. 110; Routhier, 'La ricezione dell'ecclesiologia del Vaticano II', pp. 12-3].

[123] Calabrese, 'Chiesa come "popolo di Dio" o chiesa "comunione"?', pp. 98-9.

[124] Kasper says that at a first glance it would seem that the ecclesiology of communion is not at the base of the documents of Vatican II; however, it is possible to demonstrate that it underlies all the conciliar images/metaphors (people of God, body of Christ, temple of Holy Spirit) [Kasper, *La Chiesa di Gesù Cristo: Scritti di ecclesiologia* (Brescia: Queriniana, 2011), p. 23; the original German edition is: Kasper, *Die Kirche Jesu Christi: Schriften zur ekklesiologie I* (Freiburg: Herder, 2008); *cf*. Kasper, *Chiesa Cattolica,* pp. 196-237; *cf*. Theobald, *La ricezione del Vaticano II,* p. 474; *cf*. Calabrese, 'Chiesa come "popolo di Dio" o chiesa "comunione"?', p. 107].

[125] Calabrese, 'Chiesa come "popolo di Dio" o chiesa "comunione"?', pp. 66-7.

[126] It can be argued that the ecclesiology of communion encompasses also other images of the church: shepherd-sheepfold, vine-branches, family/household of God, bride of Christ, etc.

as a *communion* of life, charity and truth' (LG 9; the metaphor of *people of God*).[127] This communion is realized through the incarnatio-paschal mystery of Christ, and so it is fittingly referred to as his body, of which he is the head. Thus, by the imagery of the intimate mutual-union between human head and body as well as among its members, the common-union with the divine and among members of the church is well expressed (LG 7; the metaphor of *body of Christ*). And to sustain this communion and to enable its members to fulfil the mission of expanding it, Christ has poured on them (LG 5) the Holy Spirit who 'dwells in the church and in the hearts of the faithful, as in a *temple*' (LG 4; the metaphor of *temple of the Spirit*).

Furthermore, several early post-conciliar commentators (some of whom were *periti* at the council) testify that the ecclesiology of 'communion' dominated the conciliar process of comprehending the nature of the church.[128] Thus, Joseph Ratzinger, a conciliar *peritus*, could later write that the *communio* ecclesiology is 'the *centrepiece* of Vatican II teaching on the church, the new and yet thoroughly primordial thing that this council wanted to give us.'[129] And Kasper, studying the works of some of these *periti*,[130] could assert that:

> One of the guiding ideas of the last council – perhaps *the* guiding idea – was therefore *communio* – communion. By taking this as a leitmotif, the council succeeded in uncovering one of the deepest questions of the time, refining it in the light of the gospel, and answering it in a way that took it beyond a purely human questioning and seeking. So the council's *communio* ecclesiology was willingly taken up … we are *all* the church.[131]

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[127] We agree with Routhier that all that Vatican II says about 'people of God' applies to the 'communion' model; and so the ecclesiology of communion should not be developed without the notion of 'people of God' (Routhier, *Il concilio Vaticano II*, p. 111).

[128] A. Grillmeier, 'The Mystery of the Church' in Vorgrimler (ed.), *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II*, vol. 1, pp. 142, 153-4; C. O'Donnell, 'The People of God' in Flannery (ed.), *Vatican II: The Church Constitution*, p. 54; *cf*. Philips, 'History of the Constitution', p. 108.

[129] Ratzinger, *Church, Ecumenism and Politics*, p. 17.

[130] Kasper refers to the commentaries of Philip and Grillmeier (referred to earlier on): see endnote no. 3 of chapter 8 ('The Church as Communion') in Kasper, *Theology and Church*.

[131] Kasper, *Theology and Church*, pp. 149-50; the highlighting of words in *italics* was done by the author; *cf.* Kasper, *La Chiesa di Gesù Cristo*, p.23; *cf*. M. Sullivan, *The Road to Vatican II: Key Changes in Theology* (New York: Paulist, 2007), pp. 17-8; C. Ruddy, *The Local Church: Tillard and the Future of Catholic Ecclesiology* (New York: Herder & Herder, 2006), pp. 38-46.

Moreover, by critically examining the text of *Lumen gentium* itself, it becomes quite evident that linking many other models of Vatican II is the primary model of communion.[132] For instance, in view of the invisible and visible aspects of the communion, the church can be seen as a *sacrament of communion*: 'the church is in Christ like a sacrament or as a sign and instrument both of a very closely knit *union with God* and of the *unity of the whole human race*' (LG 1). Here the model of 'sacrament' is secondary to 'communion', for the former describes what the church is in its essence: communion.[133] Secondly, one could say that the goal of the church's *mission* is *communion* with God and among his people (*cf.* LG 9). That is, the 'mission' is not an end in itself, and so it is secondary to its goal: 'communion'. Thirdly, the 'church, which the Spirit …unified in *communion* and in works of ministry, he both equips and directs with *hierarchical* and charismatic gifts' (LG 4). And these gifts are for the building up of that which is primary: the communion (*cf.* 1 Cor. 12:6-7). It is, therefore, no wonder that soberly reflecting twenty years after Vatican II, the 1985 Synod of Bishops could affirm the primacy of the communion model (*cf.* subsection 2.5.2).

1.5.5 Contextualization

In chapter six of this study, there is an examination of some efforts by the Catholic Church in Africa to 'receive' the conciliar communion model as 'family of God' in her context. Here, we only wish to examine the various terms associated with this process, and to indicate our preferred term. This subsection then concludes with a brief highlight on works on 'church as family of God' by four Ghanaian priest-scholars and by two other Africans; this is to enable us to specify the areas of concern of our study.

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[132] R.R. Gaillardetz, *Ecclesiology for a Global Church: A People Called and Sent* (New York: Orbis, 2008), p. 107.

[133] J.-M. Tillard, *Church of Churches: The Ecclesiology of Communion* (Collegeville: Liturgical, 1992), p. 29; the original French edition is: Tillard, *Église d'Églises* (Paris: Cerf, 1987); Calabrese, 'Chiesa come "popolo di Dio" o chiesa "comunione"?', pp. 68-9, 99-100.

Some of the terms employed to express the process whereby theology takes into consideration its particular context include: adaptation, accommodation, incarnation, indigenization, inculturation and contextualization. According to Joseph Osei-Bonsu, the terms 'adaptation' and 'accommodation' were commonly used in official Roman Catholic documents and theology until 1975. These terms, he says, were used synonymously to express the process of adapting the Christian message to the local cultures. They were, however, abandoned for several reasons:[134] firstly, they could lead one to think of cultural modifications of somewhat transitory and external nature;[135] secondly, they contain 'the seeds of perpetual Western superiority and domination'.[136]

Already at the 1974 Synod of Bishops (in Rome) on the theme of evangelization in the modern world, the bishops of Africa, taking a cue from Vatican II (*cf.* AG 22), spoke of their intention to replace the 'theology of adaptation' with the 'theology of incarnation'.[137] The incarnational approach could be explained as follows: as the eternal Word of God was incarnated in a human culture to redeem humanity and creation as a whole, so the Word of God and the Christian faith must be become incarnated in human cultures and expressed through these cultures, so that the redemption of Christ could be realized in them.[138]

A year after the 1974 Rome Synod, some of the bishops meeting at the Fourth General Assembly of the Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar (SECAM), while maintaining the incarnational approach, employed another term: 'indigenization'. They explained this as the incarnation of the message of Christ in a

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[134] J. Osei-Bonsu, *The Inculturation of Christianity in Africa: Antecedents and Guidelines from the New Testament and the Early Church* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2005), pp. 14-5. This author is the bishop of Konongo-Mampong Diocese (Ghana).
[135] Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, *The Roman Liturgy and Inculturation*, 25 January 1994, no. 4, AAS 87 (1995), pp. 289-90.
[136] A. Shorter, *African Christian Theology: Adaptation or Incarnation?* (New York: Orbis, 1977), p. 150.
[137] *AMECEA Documentation Services*, 11 (1974), p. 2; Shorter, *African Christian Theology*, pp. 149-55; A. Ngindu Mushete, *La teologia africana in cammino* (Bologna: Dehoniane, 1988), pp. 5-6.
[138] J.S. Ukpong, 'Cristologia e inculturazione: una prospettiva neotestamentaria' in R. Gibellini (ed.), *Percorsi di teologia africana* (Brescia: Queriniana, 1994), p. 64.

particular culture.[139] Subsequently, the terms 'incarnation', 'indigenization' and later 'inculturation' would be used interchangeably in the official teachings and statements of the bishops of Africa, until they settled on the term of inculturation at the first *Special Assembly for Africa of the Synod of Bishops*.[140] The *mystery of the incarnation* – in the purview of the whole *mystery of redemption* – would, nonetheless, still underpin the theological foundation of their concept of inculturation.[141]

Patrick Thawale, a Catholic scholar, says that the term 'inculturation' was coined by the Protestant missionary, G. L. Barney, in 1973.[142] Thawale says, Barney's 'main concern was to keep the Christian message intact throughout the course of cultural exchange.' Hence, for Barney, the essential nature of the supra-cultural components of the gospel should neither be lost nor distorted in the process of inculturating them into a new culture. For this reason, says Thawale, the term 'immediately found favour with [Catholic] Church leaders and scholars.'[143] The term 'inculturation' has become the preferred term in Roman Catholic circles since the 1977 Synod of Bishops in Rome.[144] Osei-Bonsu, for instance, contends that he prefers this term, because it appropriately brings out the 'two-way' process of how, on the one hand, 'the Christian life and message influence the cultural context of a

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[139] *L'Église des cinq continents* (Paris: Marty, 1975), pp. 210-1. We made use of the Italian translation in A. Ngindu Mushete, *La teologia africana in cammino*, p. 6.

[140] Matena M'nteba explains why the term 'inculturation' has replaced the term 'indigenization': 'inculturation denotes a complex process, quite the opposite to a facile indigenization and an imitative reception of Christianity' [M. M'nteba, 'Inculturation in the "Third Church": God's Pentecost or Cultural Revenge?' in G. Alberigo & A. Ngindu Mushete (eds), *Towards the African Synod* (London: SCM, 1992), p. 130].

[141] John Paul II, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, *Ecclesia in Africa: On the Church in Africa and its Evangelizing Mission Towards the Year 2000* (Vatican: Vaticana, 1995*)*, nos 60-1.

[142] There are, however, various versions as to who originally coined the term, 'inculturation'. A version says it was coined by the Jesuit professor, Joseph Masson, as early as 1962 [A. Shorter, *Towards a Theology of Inculturation* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1988), p. 10]. And according to Peter Schineller, Yves Congar says that it was coined in Japan [Schineller, *A Handbook on Inculturation* (Mahwah: Paulist, 1990), p. 21; *cf.* P.G. Panganiban, 'Inculturation and the Second Vatican Council', *Landas*, 18 (2004), pp. 61-2, http://journals.ateneo. edu/ojs/index.php/landas/article/viewFile/851/882 (accessed on 24 April 2014)].

[143] P. Thawale, 'Inculturation: Liturgy, Church as Family of God, Basic Christian Communities' in SECAM, *Pan-African Congress on Evangelization* (Dar-es-Salaam: SECAM, 2007), p.114.

[144] Osei-Bonsu, *The Inculturation of Christianity in Africa*, pp. 19-21; *cf*. M. M'nteba, 'Inculturation in the "Third Church"', p. 129.

particular church', and, on the other hand, 'the impact of a given culture on the way the Christian life and message are articulated'.[145]

Usually in official Roman Catholic Church documents, when the term 'inculturation' is used, it refers specifically to the socio-cultural context, and not to the wider human context.[146] Many Catholic theologians and writers, following the usual official usage, employ the term only in this sense.[147] However, some Catholic theologians and writers use the term 'inculturation' while referring to the wider human context (culture, social change, human experience, economic realities and political situation). These theologians and writers, realizing that the term 'inculturation' does not really encompass the totality of the wider human context, debate as to whether the term 'contextualization' is preferable or not. The majority of them still prefer employing 'inculturation' to 'contextualization', simply because the term is widely used in Catholic circles.[148] Laurenti Magesa, for instance, while explicitly acknowledging the shortcomings of the term 'inculturation', still prefers it to 'contextualization', because, according to him, the former term is a 'more familiar expression.'[149] Despite the fact that Magesa opted for the term 'inculturation' at the beginning of his book, *Anatomy of Inculturation: Transforming the Church in Africa*, we observe that subsequently – in the same book – he employs

[145] Osei-Bonsu, *The Inculturation of Christianity in Africa*, pp. 19-21.
[146] *cf*. John Paul II, Encyclical Letter, *Redemptoris missio*, 7 December 1990, no. 52, AAS 83 (1991), p. 229; *cf. Ecclesia in Africa*, no. 59.
[147] *cf.* Osei-Bonsu, *The Inculturation of Christianity in Africa*, pp. 19-21.
[148] Abamfo O. Atiemo is one of the non-Catholic scholars who prefer 'inculturation' to 'contextualization'. His argument is based on Martien E. Brinkman's definition of culture as including 'conditions for material existence', and the ability of 'inculturation' to express better, as Brinkman claims, 'the normative element'. See Atiemo, *Religion and the Inculturation of Human Rights in Ghana* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), p. 50, where he cites Brinkman, *The Non-Western Jesus: Jesus as Bodhisatta, Avatara, Guru, Prophet, Ancestor or Healer?* (London: Equinox, 2007), p. 6. We are of the opinion that though culture is a fundamental element of human existence, it does not encompass all the elements or conditions of human existence or life. The human being cannot be reduced to simply a cultural being. The human context of life is certainly wider than his or her cultural context, and so we prefer the term 'contextualization'.
[149] L. Magesa, *Anatomy of Inculturation: Transforming the Church in Africa* (New York: Orbis, 2004), pp. 7-8.

'contextualization' either alongside 'inculturation' or in place of it, betraying its inadequacy.[150]

Bevans, on the other hand, prefers to use the broader or more inclusive term of 'contextualization'. He explains that the contextualization of theology is 'the attempt to understand Christian faith in terms of a particular context.' We agree with him that the contextualization of theology 'is really a theological imperative', and that this process 'is part of the very nature of theology itself'.[151] Bevans explains his preference for 'contextualization' as follows:

> As the members of the Theological Education Fund wrote when the term was introduced in 1972, the term *contextualization* includes all that is implied in the older terms *indigenization* and *inculturation*, but seeks also to include the realities of contemporary secularity, technology, and the struggle for human justice…. Although not all theologians have accepted the terminology of *contextualization*, the term does seem to have several advantages over the several other terms…. As the Asian bishops pointed out in 1979, *contextualization* both extends and corrects the older terminology. As the Asian bishops express it, *indigenization* [and *inculturation*] focused on purely cultural dimension, while *contextualization* broadens the understanding of the [context] to include social, political and economic questions.[152]

Furthermore, the employment of the broader term 'contextualization' enables Bevans to analyse the different emphases of the various approaches of many theologians.[153] In addition, Thawale makes a point which, we consider, further strengthens the position of choosing 'contextualization' over the other terms. He says, contextualization emphasizes the need for the church to be relevant to contemporary society; and that it 'surely echoes the Vatican Council II's call for relevance, which is voiced in its Constitution *Gaudium et spes* which sets forth the relation of the church to the modern world.'[154]

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[150] Magesa, *Anatomy of Inculturation*, pp. 26, 212, 268, 270.
[151] S.B. Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology* (New York: Orbis, 2002), p.3.
[152] Bevans, *Models of Contextualized Theology*, p. 26. Here Bevans cited Theological Education Fund, *Ministry in Context: Third Mandate Programme of the Theological Education Fund (1970-1977)* (Kent: New Life, 1972); and *FABC [Federation of Asian Catholic Bishops' Conferences] Newsletter*, April 1979.
[153] Bevans identifies six main approaches or methods of contextual theology: translation, anthropological, praxis, synthetic, transcendental and countercultural.
[154] Thawale, 'Inculturation', p. 113.

Therefore, following Bevans and others we prefer to use the term 'contextualization' in this work, except when we are quoting other authors who use 'inculturation' or other terms. As noted above, the official Roman Catholic Church and many Catholic theologians migrated from the use of the terms 'accommodation' and 'adaptation' to 'incarnation' and 'indigenization', and then to 'inculturation'; we hope that sooner or later, there will be a further migration to the more inclusive term of 'contextualization'.

Now regarding the contextualization of Vatican II's communion model as 'family of God', the four Ghanaian scholars whose works we review in chapter six are Edward B. Tengan, Francis Appiah-Kubi, Gerald Tanye and Moses Asaah Awinongya. Edward Tengan considers the *Dagara* (Upper West Region of Ghana) concept of family to elucidate the understanding of the church as *family of God*. He notes that the positive values of communal life, kinship solidarity, consensus building, etc. of the *Dagara* could help in fostering a greater sense of belonging, solidarity, consensus, etc. building in the church.[155] The second Ghanaian author, Francis Appiah-Kubi, in turn, uses a generalized African concept of the family to deepen and elucidate some theological, christological, pneumatological and ecumenical aspects of the church as *family of God*.[156] Gerald Tanye follows with a consideration of the disvalue of ethnocentrism in the church as *family of God*

[155] Tengan, *House of God*; Tengan, 'The Family Model in Ecclesiology – An Example from Ghana' in A.J. Gittins (ed.), *Life and Death Matters: The Practice of Inculturation in Africa*, Studia Instituti Missiologici SVD, no. 72 (Nettetal: Steyler, 2000), pp. 45-55; Tengan, 'The Church-as-Family: An Ecclesiology of Communion from an African Perspective' in E. Babissanga & K. Nsapo (eds), *Qu' as-tu fait de ton frère? Mélanges en l'honneur de Mgr. Jan Dumon* (Kinshasa: Universitaires Africaines, 2012), pp. 435-53. Others have also done anthropological studies on the *Dagara* concept of family: A.A. Kuuire, 'Dagaati Solidarity and Salvation in Christ in the Light of *Gaudium et spes*: An Anthropologico-Theological Study', Ph.D. thesis (Pontificia Universitas Lateranensis, Rome 1976), pp. 138-249; E. Suom-Dery, *Family as Subject of Moral Education in the African Context: Incarnating Christian Ethics Among the Dagara of North-Western Ghana* (Hamburg: Dr. Kovac, 2000).

[156] F. Appiah-Kubi, *L'Église famille de Dieu : Un chemin pour les Églises d'Afrique* (Paris : Karthala, 2008).

in sub-Saharan African.[157] Finally, Moses A. Awinongya tries to understand the Ghanaian family in general in order to articulate the church as *family of God* in Ghana.[158]

It seems none of the above four studies examines the extent of reception of the model church-*family of God* in the local church (Ghana); this is, therefore, a major concern of our study. Secondly, none of them responds to the request of the bishops of the first *Special Assembly for Africa of the Synod of Bishops*, and therefore of Pope John Paul II, to demonstrate how the ecclesiology of *family of God* is complemented by the other models of the church.[159] Nonetheless, on the continental level some scholars have attempted to complement the model church-*family of God* with the models of Dulles. For instance, Pius Benson presents how the institutional model complements the model church-*family of God*,[160] and Cornelius Hankomoone looks at how the six models of Dulles complement this African model.[161] However, these scholars articulate the complementarity or harmonization between the models in a *unidirectional* manner. Our study, therefore, takes up the harmonization of models in a *dual*-directional manner (in chapter seven). That is, this study articulates the mutual complementarity or the 'symbiotic relationship' between the model church-*family of God* and Dulles' models.

1.6 Methodology

A predominantly theological approach has been employed. As a theological work, this thesis employs an expository-critical approach. That is, there is an attempt to critically synthesize the works of various authors, as well as the relevant documents of Vatican II and other documents of the church. Secondly, Dulles' theological tool of models has been

[157] G. Tanye, *Church as Family and Ethnocentrism in Sub-Saharan Africa* (Münster: LIT, 2010).
[158] M.A. Awinongya, *The Understanding of Family in Ghana as a Challenge for a Contextual Ecclesiology* (Zürich: LIT, 2013).
[159] *Ecclesia in Africa*, no. 63. For reasons in support of the legitimacy of referring to the 'church as family of God' as a 'model' see section 6.1.
[160] Benson, *The Church in the Theological Writings of Avery Dulles*, pp. 306-14.
[161] Hankomoone, 'Church as Family of God', pp. 77, 82-3.

employed to facilitate the systematization of the 'mosaic' conciliar ecclesiology and to aid the process of harmonizing the model church-*family of God* with other ecclesiological models.

Furthermore, to ascertain the extent of reception of the conciliar ecclesiology by the Catholic Church in Ghana, we examined some of its documents. In addition, we employed some empirical research methods. These methods included the use of personal interviews, questionnaires, focus group discussions, as well as personal experiences and observations. The field-work was approached as follows: A total sample size of 1,132 Catholics was obtained from selected Catholic (arch) dioceses across Ghana. The nineteen Catholic (arch) dioceses and one Apostolic Vicariate in Ghana have been organized into four ecclesiastical provinces (Accra, Cape Coast, Kumasi and Tamale). Besides, the Archdiocese of Accra (to which we belong), we selected two (arch) dioceses from each province: a more urban diocese and a more rural diocese. We then chose two urban parishes and two rural parishes from each of these nine dioceses, making a total of thirty-six parishes across the country. Then through a quota sampling, we selected from each diocese 120 lay Catholics (i.e. thirty persons from each parish) and twelve (12) from the clergy (including the diocesan bishop) and religious brothers and sisters. Subsequently, data was collected through personal interviews, focus group discussions and the use of questionnaires.[162]

1.7 Significance of the Research for Ecclesiology

The significance of this research project is its contribution in the following four areas: (a) the demonstration of how the model of communion, and consequently, its

[162] This process actually sums up to 1,188 expected respondents. In addition, we interviewed Peter K. Sarpong, Archbishop Emeritus of Kumasi, who is a pioneer in the field of contextualization, and Joseph Osei-Bonsu, President of the Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference. Thus, the expected total respondents was 1,190, but the actual number of respondents was 1,132; see subsections 6.3.3 and 6.3.4 for some details; *cf.* T.K.B. Kumekpor, *Research Methods and Techniques of Social Research: Sections 1-3* (Accra: SonLife, 2002), pp. 139-41, 179-84.

contextualized version church-*family of God*, symbiotically harmonizes with the other models of Dulles; (b) the suggestion that the relationship between the ecclesial constitutive elements (described with the aid of models) and the mystery of the church is a kind of synergy; (c) the articulation of the extent of reception of the conciliar communion ecclesiology by the Catholic Church in Ghana; and (d) the practical recommendations for the restructuring of the Catholic Church in Ghana aimed at enhancing the sense of belonging, co-responsibility and active participation of all the faithful in the church's life and mission. We hope that our approach and suggestions will stimulate further discussions in Catholic ecclesiology in Africa as a whole.

1.8 Organization of Study

This work is divided into three main parts, besides a general conclusion. In all, there are seven chapters. Part one consists of the introductory and second chapters. In the introductory chapter, we have attempted to give an insight into the 'mosaic' ecclesiology of Vatican II and indicated the appropriateness of the use of models to theologically articulate it. The second chapter looks at the reception of the ecclesiology of Vatican II in the Catholic world in the past fifty years, highlighting that since the 1985 Synod of Bishops, the communion model of the church has generally been considered as the key to comprehending this ecclesiology.

Chapters three and four make up the second part of this study. Chapter three considers Dulles' six models of institution, mystical communion, sacrament, herald, servant and community of disciples. Some indications are then given as to how Dulles' approach is being adopted in a fashion of 'renewal in continuity'. In the fourth chapter, there is an attempt to construct a systematic ecclesiology by a process of harmonization showing how

the communion model compensates for some of the weaknesses of the other models and, on the other hand, how each other model augments the shortfalls in the primary model.

Part three consists of chapters five, six and seven. The fifth chapter presents the traditional African concept of family – the matrix for the contextualization of the communion model as church-*family of God*. This presentation is from the perspective of the *Akan* people of Ghana. Chapter six, in turn, looks at the reception of the model church-*family of God* in African theology and praxis, with particular consideration of the situation in the Catholic Church in Ghana. Then, in chapter seven, there is a consideration of some theoretical and practical prospects of a communion-based ecclesiology for the Catholic Church in Ghana. The study then concludes with a general synthesis of the entire work, highlighting the achievements of the research objectives.

CHAPTER TWO: THE RECEPTION OF THE ECCLESIOLOGY OF VATICAN II IN THE CATHOLIC WORLD

2.1 Introduction

As a study on the reception of the ecclesiology of Vatican II, this chapter attempts to answer the following questions: (a) what is 'reception' in Catholic theology? (b) What has been the actual process of reception of the conciliar ecclesiology in the Catholic Church (across the world) since the beginning of the council? (c) What has been the development of the primary ecclesiological model of communion since the council?

2.2 The Concept of Ecclesial Reception

In the post-conciliar era, the concept of reception in Catholic theology has gone through various developments in meaning. Initially, reception was understood simply as the process by which some teaching, discipline, law or ritual was assimilated into the life of a local church.[163] Alois Grillmeier was one of the first Catholic scholars to develop a theology of reception. He was indebted to certain theories of legal reception in which a legal tradition from one group of people is 'received' by another group. He noticed that in such a legal framework, reception is 'exogenous': it is a reception by a community of something which comes to it from the outside. Applying this legal theory to the life of the church, Grillmeier refers to the ecclesial process by which the ancient churches accepted synodal decrees from other churches as 'exogenous'.[164] But is ecclesial reception as exogenous as Grillmeier presents it?

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[163] R.R. Gaillardetz, 'The Reception of Doctrine: New Perspectives' in B. Hoose (ed.), *Authority in the Roman Catholic Church* (London: Ashgate, 2002), p. 95.

[164] A. Grillmeier, 'Konzil und Rezeption. Methodische Bemerkungen zu einem Thema der okumenischen Diskussion der Gegenwart', *Theologie und Philosophie*, 45 (1970), p. 324. We used the English excerpts in the work of Gaillardetz, 'The Reception of Doctrine', p. 95.

Yves Congar argues that by insisting on its exogenous character Grillmeier defines 'reception' too narrowly.[165] While acknowledging the fact that any act of authentic reception presupposes some kind of distance between the party giving and the party receiving, Congar points out that in ecclesial reception this distance is always relativized by the unity of the whole church, since local churches are not autonomous entities but exist in spiritual communion with one another. In other words, that which is received by one local church from other local churches cannot be totally foreign to it.[166]

Consequently, Congar defines ecclesial reception as the process by which an ecclesial body truly makes its own a decision that it did not make by itself, recognizing, in the promulgated measure an appropriate rule for its life. He continues: reception does not consist in the pure and simple realization of the relationship of subordination and supremacy (*secundum sub et supra*); rather it involves a contribution of consensus, and possibly of judgment, in which is expressed the life of a body that exhibits original spiritual resources.[167] In examining this definition, Christoph Theobald calls our attention to its double acquisitions. The first is that the insistence on the life-giving and salvific character of truth in the Christian context necessitates that a constitutive role is equally attributed to reception. Secondly, reception has a content (the *traditum*), but it is also situated in and at the same time in a play of relationships between those who transmit the truth, having received it themselves (*tradentes*), and those who receive it (*recipientes*).[168]

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[165] Y. Congar, 'La réception comme realité ecclésiologique', *Revue des Sciences Philosophiques et Théologiques*, 56 (1972), pp. 369-403; Congar, 'La ricezione come realtà ecclesiologica', *Concilium*, 8 (1972), pp. 1305-36; Congar, 'La "reception" comme realité ecclésiologique' in *Eglise et papaute: Regards historiques* (Paris: Cerf, 1994), pp. 229-66. We used the English excerpts in the work of Gaillardetz, 'The Reception of Doctrine', p. 96, as well as the Italian excerpts in C. Theobald, *La ricezione del Vaticano II: 1. Tornare alla sorgente* (Bologna: Dehoniane, 2011), pp. 391-4).

[166] Congar, 'La "reception" comme realite ecclésiologique', pp. 229-66; *cf.* Gaillardetz, 'The Reception of Doctrine', p. 96.

[167] Congar, 'La "reception" comme realite ecclésiologique', p. 230; *cf.* Theobald, *La ricezione del Vaticano II*, pp. 393-4.

[168] Theobald, *La ricezione del Vaticano II*, p. 394.

On the other hand, there are a couple of difficulties with Congar's definition of reception. Theobald puts the first difficulty this way: when applied to the reception of Vatican II, one may ask: how do we determine what is normative from the mass of conciliar documents? The second question, according to Theobald, concerns the act of reception itself, and about what Congar calls 'original spiritual resources' of the recipient ecclesial body: does reception imply also the exercise of critical judgment with regard to the council? Congar evokes some instances of the non-reception of councils in the past, explaining that the absence of reception does not indicate the falsity of their decisions; rather, it simply indicates that they do not convey a vital energy. In this respect, we agree with Theobald, who queries: is such a distinction not a strategy of immunization, or at least, does it not represent a way of disclosing an unpredictable future?[169]

Some theologians, including Jean-Marie R. Tillard,[170] Wolfgang Beinert,[171] Hervé Legrand,[172] Ángel Antón[173] and Hermann J. Pottmeyer[174] have developed further the works of Grillmeier and Congar. Like Congar, these theologians hold that ecclesial reception is not a unidirectional process from the '*teaching* church' to the '*receiving* church', rather there is also a contribution from the latter.[175] They are convinced that 'the process of

[169] Theobald, *La ricezione del Vaticano II*, p. 395.
[170] J.-M.R. Tillard, *Church of Churches: The Ecclesiology of Communion* (Collegeville: Liturgical, 1992), pp. 118-44; Tillard, 'Reception - Communion', *One in Christ*, 28 (1992), pp. 307-22; Tillard, 'Tradition, Reception' in *The Quadrilog: Tradition and the Future of Ecumenism*, Festschrift for George Tavard (Collegeville: Liturgical, 1994), pp. 328-43.
[171] W. Beinert, 'Die rezeption und ihre Bedeutung für Leben und Lehre der Kirche' in Beinert (ed.) *Glaube als Zustimmung: Zur Interpretation kirchelicher Rezeptionsvorgänge* (Freiburg: Herder, 1991), pp. 15-47; Beinert, 'The Subjects of Ecclesial Reception', *The Jurist*, 57 (1997), pp. 329-30.
[172] H. Legrand, 'Reception, *Sensus Fidelium*, and Synodal Life: An Effort at Articulation', *The Jurist*, 51 (1997), pp. 405-31.
[173] Á. Antón, 'La "reception" en las Iglesia y eclesiologia (I): Sus fundamentos teologicos y procesos historicos en accion desde la epistemologia teologica y eclesiologia sistematica', *Gregorianum*, 77 (1996), pp. 57-96; Antón, 'La "reception" en las Iglesia y eclesiologia (II): Fundamentos teologico-eclesiologicos de la recepcion desde la eclesiologia sistematica posconciliar', *Gregorianum*, 77 (1996), pp. 437-69.
[174] H.J. Pottmeyer, 'Una nuova fase della ricezione del Vaticano II: Vent'anni di ermeneutica del concilio' in G. Alberigo & J.P. Jossua (eds), *Il Vaticano II e la chiesa* (Brescia: Paideia, 1985), pp. 41-64; the French version is: Pottmeyer, 'Vers une nouvelle phase de réception de Vatican II: Vingt ans d'herméneutique du Concile' in G. Alberigo & J.P. Jossua (eds), *La réception de Vatican II (*Paris : Cerf, 1985), pp. 48-52; Pottmeyer, 'Reception and Submission', *The Jurist*, 51 (1991), pp. 269-92.
[175] *cf.* S. Noceti, 'Pensare il post-concilio tra ricezione ed ermeneutica', *Ad Gentes*, 16 (2012), p. 13.

ecclesial reception involves an active discernment by the churches regarding the authenticity of that which is being "received".… Thus reception can only follow upon a prior recognition in which the receiver/receiving community recognizes their own faith – however new its expression – in that which they receive.'[176]

Secondly, though like Congar, these theologians see ecclesial reception as constitutive of the church, they seem to be more explicit in stating that it results in the *transformation* of the receiving community as well as that which is received. Thirdly, while they concur with Congar that non-reception is possible, they highlight the fact that reception is a process which develops over time, usually beyond a single generation. Therefore, one should not be hasty in concluding that a teaching, rite or discipline has not been 'received'. Finally, these theologians introduce a new element into the concept of ecclesial reception inherited from Congar: the process of reception begins not with a doctrinal teaching, rite or discipline, but with the reception of the living word of God.[177]

The approaches to the study of ecclesial reception used by Tillard, Beinert, Legrand, Antón, Pottmeyer and Theobald have been mainly theological. However, Richard R. Gaillardetz calls our attention to other post-conciliar studies 'which reach out beyond the fields of historical theology, biblical studies and church history to initiate a creative conversation between theology and the fields of hermeneutics, literary theory, communications theory and cultural anthropology.'[178] Most of the authors of these creative works embrace the points of the 'post-Congar' scholars, while they seek to develop further, in particular, our understanding of the recognition-acceptance-transformation aspect of the process of ecclesial reception. In this regard, a major contribution of the hermeneutical

[176] Gaillardetz, 'The Reception of Doctrine', pp. 97-8.
[177] Gaillardetz, 'The Reception of Doctrine', pp. 98-9; *cf*. Noceti, 'Pensare il post-concilio', pp. 13-4.
[178] Gaillardetz, 'The Reception of Doctrine', p. 99; *cf*. Routhier, 'La ricezione dell'ecclesiologia del Vaticano II: Problemi aperti' in Associazione Teologica Italiana, *La chiesa e il Vaticano II: Problemi di ermeneutica and ricezione conciliare* (Milano: Glossa, 2005), p. 44-5.

approach is 'the way in which dialogue and conversation are given a constitutive role in the continuing validity of a doctrine.'[179] Dialogue and conversation, according to Claude Geffre,[180] David Tracy[181] and Paul Crowley,[182] take place between the historical horizon of the normative doctrine and the horizon of the contemporary believer or believing community – the latter horizon being the 'set of prejudgments, expectation, questions and concerns which engages the doctrine'.[183]

While Ormond Rush[184] and Linda Gaither,[185] following the 'reader reception' theorists, agree with the hermeneutical approach that there is a conversation between the horizon of the doctrine and that of the contemporary interpreter (community), they hold on the other hand that it is the interpreter, and not the doctrinal statement (text), who initiates the conversation. Here, therefore, there is more stress on the point that the interpretation begins, not with the doctrinal statement, but with the reception of the living word of God.[186]

Quite similar to modern hermeneutics and the 'reader reception theory', the contemporary communications theory perceives 'communication as a reciprocal act of sharing in which the listener actively and selectively appropriates that which is communicated.' Francis Schussler Fiorenza,[187] Paul Lakeland[188] and others are exploring the potential of further enrichment that communications theory could offer the church as a

[179] Gaillardetz, 'The Reception of Doctrine', p. 101.
[180] C. Geffre, *The Risk of Interpretation* (Mahwah: Paulist, 1987).
[181] D. Tracy, *The Analogical Imagination* (New York: Crossroad, 1981).
[182] P. Crowley, *In Ten Thousand Places: Dogma in a Pluralistic Church* (New York: Crossroad Herder, 1997).
[183] Gaillardetz, 'The Reception of Doctrine', p.100.
[184] O. Rush, *The Reception of Doctrine: An Appropriation of Hans Robert Jauss' Reception Aesthetics and Literary Hermeneutics* (Rome: Gregorian, 1997).
[185] L. Gaither, *To Receive a Text: Literary Reception Theory as a Key to Ecumenical Reception* (New York: Peter Lang, 1997).
[186] Gaillardetz, 'The Reception of Doctrine', p. 103.
[187] F. Schussler Fiorenza, 'The Church as a Community of Interpretation: Political Theology between Discourse Ethics and Hermeneutical Reconstruction', in D.S. Browning & F. Schussler Fiorenza (eds), *Habermas, Modernity and Public Theology* (New York: Crossroad, 1992), pp. 66-91.
[188] P. Lakeland, *Theology and Critical Theory: The Discourse of the Church* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1990).

community of conversation.[189] The fourth area of creative works is the new insight from recent studies of popular religiosity. For Orlanda Espin,[190] Roberto Goizueta,[191] and others, popular religiosity both precedes and follows doctrinal expressions.[192]

After reviewing the works of Grillmeier, Congar, the 'post-Congar' theologians and the four creative areas of studies mentioned above, Gaillardetz advocates for a new model of doctrinal teaching and reception: the *communio* model. According to him,

> The distinction between this model and that which dominated for much of the second millennium is this: the latter model presents a unidirectional trajectory that begins with magisterial teaching and ends with obediential submission of the faithful; the former offers instead a spiral-like trajectory in which there are two moments of reception: the first occurring as the bishops receive the faith of the people, and the second occurring as the faithful receive the doctrinal formulation of the bishops.[193]

Explaining further, Gaillardetz, informed by the insight from popular religiosity says that 'in the first moment of reception, we begin not with laws and doctrines but with the lived experience and testimony of the Christian community.'[194] Then the bishops, immersed in the life of the church, in receiving the faith expressions of the community (in view of *sensus fidelium*) and assessing their fidelity to the apostolic tradition could be aided by the modern notion of communicative action toward understanding. This 'theory puts a premium on the vital discourse that must transpire within a community and the "truth" that emerges out of that discourse.'[195]

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[189] Gaillardetz, 'The Reception of Doctrine', pp. 105-6.
[190] O. Espin, *The Faith of the People: Theological Reflections on Popular Catholicism* (New York: Orbis, 1997).
[191] R. Goizueta, *Caminemos con Jesus: Toward a Hispanic/Latino Theology of Accompaniment* (New York: Orbis, 1995).
[192] Gaillardetz, 'The Reception of Doctrine', p. 107. In Africa Laurenti Magesa and others are also considering impulses that the Catholic Church can take from African traditional religions and African Independent Churches [Magesa, *Anatomy of Inculturation: Transforming the Church in Africa* (New York: Orbis, 2004), pp. 234-46; Magesa, 'End of the Bishops' Assembly: Beginning and Future of the African Synod', *AFER* 37 (1995), pp. 11-3].
[193] Gaillardetz, 'The Reception of Doctrine', p. 108.
[194] Gaillardetz, 'The Reception of Doctrine', p. 108.
[195] Gaillardetz, 'The Reception of Doctrine', p. 109.

Furthermore, according to Gaillardetz, the theological appropriations of modern hermeneutics and 'reader reception' theory aid us to appreciate what the 'second moment' of reception of the doctrinal formulations by the faithful entails:

> We are reminded of the constitutive role of interpretation and aesthetics in the appropriation of meaning in a teaching event. When this active appropriation on the part of the faithful occurs (and it does not always), to the extent that it is an authentic and not merely an obediential reception, it will bring something new to the life of that church, particularly as this reception may well take place in a quite new and different ecclesial context. This reception of the faith in a new context may lead to 'a fresh remembrance', a 'rediscovery' of neglected elements from the tradition now seen from within a new horizon of interpretation….[196]

On the one hand, the 'model' of Gaillardetz has some merits. Firstly, as against the notion of 'one moment' reception in the definitions of some contemporary theologians,[197] is his notion of 'two moments', by which the faith experiences and expressions of the faithful could be given a greater consideration in the actual reception process. Secondly, the notion of 'spiral-like trajectory' in his presentation underscores the ongoing nature of the reception process. On the other hand, one may perceive some weaknesses in Gaillardetz's *communio* 'model' of ecclesial reception. He seems to say that the 'first moment' of reception by the bishops necessarily precedes the 'second moment' of reception by the faithful. However, as he himself notes, popular religiosity does not always precede the formulation of doctrinal statements, it sometimes follows the formulation. In this light, there might be a reception by the faithful without a prior reception by the bishops. Secondly, the word of God, prominent in the 'post-Congar' works that he reviews, does not seem to feature in Gaillardetz's articulation of his model.

From the above, one could conclude as follows: grounded in the living word of God, ecclesial reception is an ongoing 'spiral-like' reciprocal process between the teaching

[196] Gaillardetz, 'The Reception of Doctrine', p. 109.
[197] For instance, Theobald, having in mind only 'one moment', defines reception of a council merely as a post-conciliar process (Theobald, *La ricezione del Vaticano II*, p. 12).

authority of the church and the church as a whole, whereby the former appraise the faith experiences and expressions of the latter, and (if need be) formulate doctrinal or disciplinary statements; whereas the latter (also as active participants) discern, accept (or reject) and assimilate the formulations to become their own in such a way there is a transformation of both their community and that which is received.

2.3 Periodization of the Reception of Vatican II

We just saw above that there are, at least, two moments in the process of ecclesial reception. However, in this section and in the remainder of this chapter, we dwell more on the 'second moment' of reception of Vatican II by all the faithful than on the 'first moment' of reception. Secondly, it is over five decades since Pope John XXIII announced his intention of convoking Vatican II; how then do we attempt to systematize its process of reception over such a span of time? Some theologians have attempted to do so by partitioning this span of time into periods or phases; this is what they refer to as 'periodization'. The periodization of the reception of Vatican II is, however, not a clear-cut issue as the extents of reception of various teachings of the council exhibit different patterns or rhythms. Moreover, there are varying levels of reception by local churches across the Catholic world.[198]

Furthermore, different theologians present different categorizations of their periods or phases. For instance, in the 1980s Joseph Ratzinger presented three periods: the period of euphoria which ended in 1968, followed by a period of disillusion (1970-1980), and then the 1980s which represented a period of synthesis and equilibrium.[199] Still in the 1980s, Pottmeyer would be inspired by the approach of Ratzinger to attempt a dialectic

[198] Noceti, 'Pensare il post-concilio', pp. 15-6.
[199] J. Ratzinger, *Les principes de la théologie catholique: esquisse et matériaux* (Paris : Téqui, 1982) pp. 428-38. We used the summary in G. Routhier, *Il concilio Vaticano II: Ricezione ed ermeneutica* (Milan: Vita e Pensiero, 2007), p. 15.

presentation of the reception of Vatican II (in the twenty years since it ended) as a movement towards a synthesis, organized in three phases. The first phase was that of enthusiasm – a phase in which innovative forces were expressed. This was followed by another phase characterized by delusion or reaction – more favourable to the conservative tendencies. Then followed a third and concluding phase of synthesis, which could open a new stage of reception and could result in a recovery of the more coherent principal contributions of the preceding two phases.[200]

We agree with Gilles Routhier that the above approaches to periodization by Ratzinger and Pottmeyer do not reveal the complexity of the reality of the reception of Vatican II; for it is not exactly true that the conservative and progressive tendencies sequentially replaced each other in some kind of dialectics. Rather in any one period or phase both tendencies existed.[201] Not pretending to be able to present a periodization that takes all the complexity of conciliar reception into consideration, Routhier focuses on Vatican II as a reforming council and delineates four general phases in this respect. Besides the above reasons, we are adopting Routhier's periodization because, unlike those of the others mentioned, his first phase begins before the actual commencement of Vatican II.[202] In this way, his approach takes cognizance of the fact that the council is not only a point of

[200] H. Pottmeyer, 'Una nuova fase della ricezione del Vaticano II: Vent'anni di ermeneutica del concilio' in G. Alberigo & J.P. Jossua (eds), *Il Vaticano II e la chiesa* (Brescia: Paideia, 1985), pp. 41-64. Routhier says that Pottmeyer's periodization of three phases has influenced many others including Kasper and Antón (Routhier, *Il concilio Vaticano II*, p. 15). Theobald also seems to be influenced by the threefold categorization. His three periods are: the pontificate of Paul VI; the beginning of the pontificate of John Paul II till the publications of *Tertio millennio adveniente* (1994) and other official church documents in preparation for the celebration of the great Jubilee of year 2000; and the third and contemporary period began from that time (Theobald, *La ricezione del Vaticano II*, pp. 429-510). In her recent article, Serena Noceti also indicates that Pottmeyer's periodization inspires the threefold phases demarcated by the two symbolic events of the 1985 Synod and the Great Jubilee Year (2000), giving the phases as 1965-1985, 1985-2000, with the third and contemporary phase beginning from the year 2000 (Noceti, 'Pensare il post-concilio', pp. 16-9). Thus, though the threefold structure is common to these scholars, the timelines for their phases differ.

[201] Routhier, *Il concilio Vaticano II*, pp.15-6.

[202] *cf*. G. Calabrese, 'Chiesa come "popolo di Dio" o chiesa "comunione"?' in Associazione Teologica Italiana, *La chiesa e il Vaticano II*, p. 63.

departure of the teachings of the church, but it is also a point of arrival.[203] As a point of arrival, the formulations of Vatican II are, to use Gaillardetz's expressions, a 'first moment' of reception, and as a point of departure, they generate a 'second moment' of reception.[204] In addition, by considering the 1985 Synod of Bishops (Rome) as the beginning of his fourth and contemporary phase, Routhier's approach supports our position of privileging the communion model of the church.

According to Routhier, the first phase began with the announcement of John XXIII in 1959. This was a time of expectation and the media played a significant role. The second phase, he says, began if not in February, 1964, then certainly from December, 1965, when the initial liturgical reforms began to take place. In this period, some resisted the reforms, while many felt they were too little and too late. Many bishops were, therefore, occupied with the task of exhorting the faithful to be patient and to avoid excesses. These were some of the reactions in the face of disappointments due to the slowness, insufficiency and the fear of reforms. Furthermore, the reforms lagged behind the rapid social, cultural and political changes of 1966-1971. Routhier says that this period could be described as 'institutional reception'; it was a period in which there was a tension between 'movement' and 'institution'.[205]

The third period, according to Routhier, began after the 1971 Synod of Bishops in Rome, and it lasted till 1985. There were two important moments in this period: the 1974

[203] G. Canobbio, 'L'attualità dell'ecclesiologia del Vaticano II e i limiti della sua ricezione', *Teologia* 36 (2011), pp. 173, 181-2. *cf.* W. Kasper, *Chiesa Cattolica: Essenza-realtà-missione* (Brescia: Queriniana, 2012), pp.30-1.

[204] In line with the spiral-like trajectory mentioned by Gailllardetz, the 'second moment' is followed by other 'first moments' of reception. Furthermore, it is worth noting that though Routhier's periodization allows for two moments of reception of Vatican II, his definition of the concept (like that of Theobald [*La ricezione del Vaticano II*, p. 12] and others) accounts for only one moment. He says that reception is a process by which an ecclesial group (especially, a local church) appropriates, assimilates and integrates a spiritual good, that she did not produce but was offered to her, to the extent of recognizing it (the good) as her own, and making it determinant for her life (Routhier, 'La ricezione dell'ecclesiologia del Vaticano II', p. 3; Routhier, *Il concilio Vaticano II*, 44).

[205] Routhier, *Il concilio Vaticano II*, pp. 76-7.

Synod of Bishops in Rome, during which the problem of the place of the institution of synods in the post-conciliar era emerged; and the second conclave of 1978 – as a time to re-launch and re-orientate the reception of Vatican II. This phase concluded with the publication of the 1983 *Code of Canon Law* and the 1985 Extraordinary Synod of Bishops held in Rome to mark the twentieth anniversary of the closing of Vatican II. This synod was preceded by a long interview of Joseph Ratzinger by Vittorio Messori. The interview had a lot of influence on the synodal deliberations. However, the synod did not ratify the position of Ratzinger; rather it chose to offer a synthesis which was open to the future.[206]

The fourth phase followed. Routhier says that beginning from the 1985 Synod, we have a mixture of progression and regression as far as the conciliar reception is concerned. On the one hand, there is great encouragement for movements (quite independent of the local bishops) that arose from the charismatic movement, and some important openings of progression (the prayer meeting at Assisi, dialogue with the Jews, and the papal publications of *Ut unum sint* and *Tertio millennio adveniente*, etc.). On the other hand, there seems to be retrogression on some conciliar ecclesiological themes, especially the following: collegiality, the local church, the relationship between the Catholic Church and other churches, etc. There is more emphasis on Catholic identification – the publication of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (1992) contributes to this trend – and there is the attempt to contain the centrifugal forces present in a multi-polarized church.[207] Furthermore, it could be observed that while there is a mobilization of new groups (the new communities, the youth, etc.) in view of the new evangelization, other groups, whose

[206] Routhier, *Il concilio Vaticano II*, pp. 78-9.
[207] Routhier, *Il concilio Vaticano II*, p. 79; *cf*. Noceti, 'Pensare il post-concilio', p. 18.

actions were already determined during the council (episcopal conferences, theologians) see their spaces of initiative reduced and clearly limited.[208]

The above periodization of four phases by Routhier provides us with a framework within which to present the reception of the 'mosaic' ecclesiology of Vatican II in the next section.

2.4 The Reception of the 'Mosaic' Ecclesiology of Vatican II

To present a balanced picture (within the limits of our study) of the reception of the 'mosaic' ecclesiology of Vatican II, this section looks at the reception both in theory and in practice.[209] By reception in theory we mean the doctrinal and theological elaborations, and by practice we refer to the lived experience of the community of believers. With regard to the latter this section focuses on the liturgy, the reform of institutional structures or establishment of new ones, and the emergence or growth of certain post-conciliar phenomena.

2.4.1 First Phase: 'Traditional' Ecclesiology versus Ecclesiology of *Ressourcement*

In this first phase of 'expectation' (1959-1965), there was a tension between 'traditional' Catholic ecclesiology and the ecclesiology of *ressourcement*. The traditional Catholic ecclesiology, which had been prominent since the Council of Trent (1545-1563), perceived the church principally as an institution; and this was what the preparatory commission of Vatican II, dominated by officials of the Roman curia, would present in the first schema on the 'Constitution on the Church', *De ecclesia*.

[208] Routhier, *Il concilio Vaticano II*, p. 79.
[209] Routhier, *Il concilio Vaticano II*, p. 47.

Meanwhile, some decades prior to the 1959 announcement by John XXIII, a minority of theologians had sought to return to the sources of Scripture and the writings of the church fathers with the view of bringing fresh theological (ecclesiological) perspectives that retrieve a more normative past.[210] In France, the approach of returning to the sources (referred to as *ressourcement*) was the method employed by what came to be known as *la nouvelle théologie* ('new theology'). Among the theologians of *la nouvelle théologie* were Yves Congar, Marie-D. Chenu, Jean Daniélou and Henri de Lubac. And from other parts of Europe, theologians like Romano Guardini, Karl Rahner, Hugo Rahner, Hans Urs von Balthasar and Karl Adam also employed the approach of returning to the sources.[211] In contrast to the institutional emphasis of the post-tridentine ecclesiology, the various ecclesiologies (church as mystical body of Christ, as people of God, as communion, and as sacrament) of the 'new theologians' were distinguished by their emphasis on the mystery of the church.[212]

The works of the 'new theologians' would begin to influence some bishops such that by the time Vatican II officially began in 1962, the fathers of the council would call for the withdrawal of the initial schema (*De ecclesia*), as it was dominated by the institutional model of the church.[213] Stephen Schloesser affirms that the first 'schema was immediately

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[210] *cf*. M.J. Himes, 'The Development of Ecclesiology: Modernity to Twentieth Century' in P.C. Phan (ed.), *The Gift of the Church*: *A Textbook on Ecclesiology* (Minnesota: Liturgical, 2000), p. 63; *cf*. M. Sullivan*, The Road to Vatican II: Key Changes in Theology* (New York: Paulist, 2007), p.17; *cf.* J.W. O'Malley, 'Vatican II: Did Anything Happened?' in D. G. Schultenover (ed.), *Vatican II: Did Anything Happen?* (New York: Continuum, 2008), pp. 64-7.

[211] Sullivan*, The Road to Vatican II*, pp.19-21; Himes, 'The Development of Ecclesiology', p. 63; Kasper, *Chiesa Cattolica*, p. 113.

[212] S. Pié-Ninot, *Ecclesiologia: La sacramentalità della comunità cristiana* (Brescia: Queriniana, 2008), pp. 72-4; Sullivan*, The Road to Vatican II*, pp. 64-6, 91-102; D. M. Doyle, *Communion Ecclesiology: Vision and Versions* (New York: Orbis, 2000), pp. 52-5, 57-9.

[213] *cf*. G. Philips, 'History of the Constitution' in H. Vorgrimler (ed.), *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II*, vol. 1 (New York: Herder, 1967), p. 106.

rejected, the game having been lost even before *De ecclesia* began to be discussed by the fathers.'[214]

After a revision, the second schema (1963) which was submitted by the Theological Commission began with a chapter on 'The Mystery of the Church'. Upon further discussions and revisions by the council fathers, the final document which was approved on 21 November 1964, as *Lumen gentium* would retain 'The Mystery of the Church' as the first of its eight chapters. Under this chapter, the mystery of the church would be elaborated using various images, metaphors and themes (*cf*. section 1.1). Then the whole of the second chapter would be dedicated to the church as 'people of God'. Only after these two chapters, is the institutional aspect of the church addressed in chapter three. Thus, thanks to the efforts of the theologians of *ressourcement*, there was a paradigm shift in Catholic ecclesiology by the conclusion of the deliberations on the nature of the church: she is first and foremost a mystery.[215]

With regard to the reception in practice, one could mention firstly that the overall communal-participatory orientation of the multi-faceted ecclesiology of Vatican II fostered the already existing lay movements. Secondly, following the promulgation of the 'Constitution on Sacred Liturgy', *Sacrosanctum concilium* (1963), which aims at the full, conscious and active participation of all the faithful during worship,[216] the initial liturgical reforms began towards the end of this first phase.

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[214] S. Schloesser, 'Against Forgetting: Memory, History, Vatican II' in G. Schultenover (ed.), *Vatican II: Did Anything Happen*, p. 63; *cf*. Giuseppe Alberigo says that: 'more than 90% of the preparatory schemata', characterized by maintaining the ecclesial *status quo*, would be rejected outright by the council fathers. Thus, on 11 October, 1962, when the council commenced, it seemed that it 'would begin its work from scratch' [G. Alberigo, 'Conclusion: Preparing for What Kind of Council?' in G. Alberigo & J. Komonchak (eds), *History of Vatican II, Vol. I: Announcing and Preparing Vatican II. Towards a New Era in Catholicism* (New York: Orbis, 1995), p. 501].

[215] A. Melloni & G. Ruggieri, 'Introduzione' in A. Melloni & G. Ruggieri (eds), *Chi ha paura del Vaticano II?* (Roma: Carocci, 2009), p. 11.

[216] Vatican II, *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, *Sacrosanctum concilium*, 4 December 1963, no. 14.

2.4.2 Second Phase: Prominence of Church as People of God

In the years immediately following Vatican II, the ecclesiology that was most prominent was that of the church as people of God.[217] A major source of inspiration for the promotion of this notion of the church was the prominent place it occupied in the text of *Lumen gentium*. While progressive tendencies highlighted the ecclesiology of people of God, at least in theory, the conservative tendencies attempted to sustain the pre-conciliar position of the church as institution.[218] The theologies of the church as sacrament, church as body of Christ, church as temple of the Holy Spirit and church as communion were not lost sight of, but they were not as prominent as that of 'people of God'.[219]

Meanwhile the model of the church as servant began to emerge, most especially in the so-called 'Third World' countries. For instance, already in 1967, the bishops of Democratic Republic of the Congo (Africa) stated at their plenary assembly: 'Today the people of God can only fulfil its proper mission which is to bring the good news to all men [and women], by incarnating itself in the *service of the world*.'[220] They would continue: 'If the church puts itself at the *service of the world*, she does not do this to have the chance to evangelize; on the contrary, *this service itself is evangelization*.'[221] In Latin America, a very significant milestone for the fostering of the model of the church as servant was the 1968 General Conference of Latin American Bishops in Medellin (Columbia).

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[217] Kasper, *Chiesa Cattolica*, p. 41; *cf.* J. Ratzinger, 'Alcuni aspetti della chiesa intesa come comunione' in J. Capmany, J. Ratzinger et al, *La chiesa mistero di comunione per la missione: Un contributo teologico e pastorale* (Roma: Urbaniana, 1997), p. 57; *cf.* Routhier, 'La ricezione dell'ecclesiologia del Vaticano II', pp. 7-12.

[218] There was even a case of non-reception of the ecclesiological paradigm shift by French Archbishop M. Lefebvre and his followers, as they stuck to the pre-conciliar institutionalism.

[219] Calabrese, 'Chiesa come "popolo di Dio" o chiesa "comunione"?', pp. 70-3.

[220] *Actes, VII Assemblée Pléniere de l'Episcopat du Congo* (1967), no. 115, cited in F. Murray, 'The Witness of a Servant Church', *AFER* 13 (1971), p. 8.

[221] *Actes, VII Assemblée Pléniere de l'Episcopat du Congo* (1967), no. 109.

On the practical level of reception, the holding of synods of bishops in Rome (1967 and 1971),[222] the establishment of national episcopal conferences,[223] of diocesan and parish councils/committees, the endorsement of Basic Ecclesial Communities (BECs)[224] by the 1968 Medellin Conference of bishops for the church in Latin America, and the greater participation in the liturgy by the lay faithful and the religious were among the indicators of the reception of the theologies of the church as people of God, body of Christ and community. Concerning the liturgy, one could say that following the reforms decreed by Vatican II, many lay faithful and religious participated actively during worship as they saw that by virtue of their baptism they are (together with the clergy) 'a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a redeemed people' (1 Pet. 2:9; *cf*. 2:4-5).[225] On the other hand, a minority conservative group kept to the pre-conciliar order of liturgy which portrayed more of the institutional character of the church.

Furthermore, with regard to the practical reception of the model of the church as servant, the local churches (most especially in the developing countries) would continue to foster the provision of social amenities (schools, hospitals, orphanages) especially in places where governments were not providing these facilities. In addition, in Africa where there were injustices due to mismanagement of resources or abuse of political power by heads of newly independent countries, or due to oppression by colonial masters, some bishops would become the 'voice of the voiceless'. Certain bishops in some Latin American countries played a similar prophetic role in calling for justice for all citizens especially for the poor.

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[222] In the modern era, the synod of bishops is a new concept and practice in the Catholic Church introduced by Vatican II, as an instrument of collegial action of bishops [F.G. Morrisey, G. Sheehy et al (eds*), The Canon Law, Letter and Spirit: A Practical Guide to the Code of Canon Law* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1995), no. 718].

[223] National or other territorial episcopal conferences were introduced by Vatican II to facilitate cooperation and common pastoral actions among bishops in the same territory for the greater good of the church [*Christus Dominus*, nos 36-38; *cf*. Morrisey et al (eds*), The Canon Law, Letter and Spirit*, no. 895].

[224] 'Basic Ecclesial Communities' (BECs) is the preferred term used in Latin America. Its other names include 'Basic Christian Communities' (BCCs) and 'Small Christian Communities' (SCCs); the latter is our preferred term.

[225] *cf. Sacrosanctum concilium*, no. 14.

2.4.3 Third Phase: Dominance of Church as People of God and as Sacrament

The ecclesiology of the church as people of God maintained its dominance for a long while within the third phase (1971-1985), but this began to wane towards the end of this period.[226] Though the 1983 *Code of Canon Law* appeared to be promoting the church as people of God,[227] the propensity of juridical codification towards institutionalization and the clerical dominance of the membership of the commission for the drafting of the new Code seemed to have hindered (to some extent) the fostering of the communal nature of the 'people of God'.[228]

Meanwhile, through the works of theologians like Karl Rahner, Otto Semmerlroth, Edward Schillebeeckx, and later of Walter Kasper, the model of the church as sacrament would begin to gain more prominence.[229] The understanding of the church as sacrament was seen as being able to adequately cater for the visible and invisible aspects of the church and thereby as a solution of the tension between the conservative tendencies (who vouched for institutional model) and the progressives (who opted for the notions of people of God and community).[230] At the same time, a minority of scholars (e.g. Severino Dianich, and

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[226] Some of the weaknesses of the church as 'people of God' (*cf.* section 3.3), which contributed to its decline, have been mentioned by Dulles in his *Models of the Church* (New York: Doubleday, 1987), pp. 53-5.

[227] The whole Book II of the 1983 Code is entitled to the 'People of God'. For this work, we are using the new revised English translation of the Code: *The Code of Canon Law* (London: HarperCollins, 1997).

[228] We observe, for instance, that while the Code prescribes as *obligatory* the formation of diocesan 'councils' that have *only clergy* membership (e.g. diocesan priests council [can. 495], college of consultors [can. 502]), it only recommends to the *discretion* of the diocesan bishop the formation of councils that involve *lay* participation (e.g. diocesan pastoral council [can. 511], parish pastoral council [can. 536]). *cf.* Calabrese, 'Chiesa come "popolo di Dio" o chiesa "comunione"?', p. 89.

[229] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 64; *cf.* S. Dianich & S. Noceti, *Trattato sulla chiesa* (Brescia: Queriniana, 2005), p. 153; S. Hewitt-Horsman, 'Church as Sacrament: A Model for Political Ecclesiology', *New Blackfriars*, 85 (2004), pp. 358-9; Routhier, 'La ricezione dell'ecclesiologia del Vaticano II', pp. 4-7.

[230] Writing two decades after the end of the third phase (1971-1985) in which the 'church as sacrament' was a dominant model, Giacomo Canobbio interrogates: Is the 'church as sacrament of salvation' a forgotten ecclesiological category? Firstly, he presents the meaning of the conciliar texts on the church as sacrament. Secondly, he considers the remote and immediate sources of these texts. Thirdly, he gives a synthetic description of the reception of these texts. Fourthly, he looks at some documents of ecumenical dialogues (especially Catholic-Lutheran dialogues) on 'church as sacrament'; in doing so, he considers the difficulties that the description of the church as sacrament creates. Fifthly, he indicates the eventual gains that ecclesiology might have by emphasizing on the sacramentality of the church. Then, Canobbio rightly concludes that 'church as sacrament' as a category should be maintained rather than neglected despite its

Pier C. Bori), following Jerome Hamer and Yves Congar, began to develop further the conciliar model of the church as communion. Some of them presented the ecclesiology of communion in such a way that it encompassed the understanding of the church as people of God, while overcoming the weaknesses associated with the latter (*cf*. section 3.3). This emerging model of the church would be fostered by the preparations for the Extraordinary Synod of Bishops, which was held in the year (1985) this third phase ended.

Furthermore, the model of the church as servant, which emerged in the second phase, would be further promoted in the universal church by the contributions of the Latin American and African bishops at the 1971 Synod of Bishops which discussed, among other issues, the topic of justice in the world. Another aspect of ecclesiology which emerged strongly in this phase was the missionary nature of the church; this was so, thanks to the 1974 Synod of Bishops in Rome, which deliberated on the theme of evangelization in the world, and the post-synodal apostolic exhortation *Evangelii nuntiandi* of Pope Paul VI.

With regard to practical reception, generally the indicators of church as people of God that we saw in phase two were advanced further in this third phase: synods of bishops were regularly held in Rome,[231] some dioceses held their synods;[232] the workings of episcopal conferences were more evident;[233] the establishments of some diocesan and parish councils and other structures designed to enhance lay and religious participation in the life and mission of the church took place in line with the provisions of the 1983 *Code of Canon Law*. On the other hand, the diminishing significance of synods on the universal level,

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demerits; for its demerits help to clarify the identity of the church (Canobbio, 'La chiesa come sacramento di salvezza: Una categoria dimenticata?' in Associazione Teologica Italiana, *La chiesa e il Vaticano II*, pp. 115-81, esp. pp. 174-81). This conclusion is quite like that of Dulles who maintains 'church as sacrament' as a distinct and necessary model for a sound articulation of the 'mosaic' ecclesiology of Vatican II (*cf*. section 3.4). We concur with both Canobbio and Dulles (*cf*. subsections 4.5.1-4.5.3, 7.2.4).

[231] There seemed to be retrogression with regard to the significance of synods on the universal church level at the 1974 Synod in Rome.

[232] J.E. Provost, 'Structuring the Church as *Communio*', *The Jurist* 36 (1976), p. 209.

[233] Provost, 'Structuring the Church', p. 225.

which began with the 1974 Synod in Rome,[234] seemed to have been codified in the form of the consultative nature of synods (can. 343). In this way, the synodal instrumentality of collegial action of the bishops with the pope seemed to have been rendered less effective. We, therefore, agree with James E. Provost that these synods appear to be merely 'a debating society of high ranking ecclesiastics.'[235] Secondly, though lay experts and priest-theologians may indirectly contribute to the deliberations at synods on the universal church level, their absence as full participants at such forums makes the synods less representative of all Christ's faithful.[236] In additional, the institutional character of canonical codification, and the slow response to conciliar change by some of the clergy and the laity impeded the latter's greater participation in the life and mission of the church – except in the area of liturgy, where there were even attempts to contextualize the Roman rite.[237]

Furthermore, the practical reception of church as people of God or communion could be seen in the SCCs that were promoted in Africa and elsewhere thanks to the recommendation of the 1974 Synod in Rome and the 1976 policy-decision of the bishops of the Association of Member Episcopal Conferences of East Africa (AMECEA).[238] In

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[234] Melloni, 'Breve guida ai giudizi sul Vaticano II' in Melloni et al (eds), *Chi ha paura del Vaticano II?*, p. 119.

[235] Provost, 'Structuring the Church', p. 239. *cf*. Canobbio, 'L'attualità dell'ecclesiologia del Vaticano II', pp. 189-90.

[236] Provost, 'Structuring the Church', p. 239.

[237] With regard to the clergy in Africa for instance, Albert de Jong says that in order to safeguard their ecclesiastical and clerical privileges, bishops and priests resisted orientation sessions and the implementation of Vatican II [de Jong, *The Challenge of Vatican II in East Africa: The Contribution of Dutch Missionaries to the Implementation of Vatican II in Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, and Malawi, 1965-1975* (Nairobi: Pauline, 2004), pp. 83-9]. While we agree with Agbonkhianmeghe E. Orobator that de Jong's position 'is too biased to form the basis of a general statement on the attitude and positions of African ecclesiastics and clergy vis-à-vis Vatican II' [Orobator, '"After All, Africa is Largely a Non-literate Continent": The Reception of Vatican II in Africa', *Theological Studies* 74 (2013), p. 292], one cannot deny the fact in some cases bishops and priests acted as such. Concerning the passivity among many lay faithful in Africa, we concur with Orobator that the high rate of illiteracy in the early years following Vatican II was a contributing factor (Orobator, 'After All, Africa is Largely a Non-literate Continent', p. 291].

[238] 'AMECEA Plenary 1976: Building Christian Communities', *AFER* 18 (1976), pp. 249-51. In West Africa, the bishops of Burkina Faso also adopted a national policy in the 1970s to establish SCCs. Besides these there were a few other dioceses in Africa that had established SCCs [*cf*. J.T. Naab, *The Basic Christian Community in Biblical Perspective* (Port Harcourt: CIWA, 1987), p. 26].

addition, this phenomenon spread further in Latin America due to its reaffirmation at the 1979 General Conference of their bishops in Puebla.[239]

Though the historical, political and socio-economic contexts of this phase in some countries were a bit different from those of the previous phase,[240] some bishops or their national conferences continued to play their prophetic role as far as the servant model was concerned. Still in line with this notion of the church, there were provisions of social amenities by the local churches.[241] This practical aspect of the reception of the church as servant was also seen as a tangible way of expressing the church as sacrament to the nations. And to practically receive the church as 'evangelizing community', the training of lay and religious pastoral agents was emphasized, especially through the establishment of more pastoral training institutes.[242]

Finally, the phenomenon of the charismatic movement in the Catholic Church, which emerged in the second phase more as a result of the inspiration of Vatican II's 'spirit of Pentecost' than its letter, would continue to spread in this phase. This movement fosters among the laity active and enthusiastic participation in the life and mission of the church.

2.4.4 Fourth Phase: Dominance of Church as Communion

With twenty years of hindsight, the 1985 Synod of Bishops, which marked the beginning of the fourth and contemporary phase of the reception of conciliar ecclesiology, would opt for the theology of the 'church as communion' as the primary ecclesiological

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[239] J. O'Halloran, *Living Cells: Building Basic Christian Community* (Dublin: Dominican, 1980), pp. 3-4; *cf.* Naab, *The Basic Christian Community*, p. 26.

[240] In Africa, for instance, the struggle for independence had been replaced by military dictatorships in many countries.

[241] First National Catholic Pastoral Congress, *Instrumentum Laboris*, *Ecclesia in Ghana*: *On the Church in Ghana and its Evangelizing Mission in the Third Millennium, April 1997, Cape Coast* (Takoradi: St. Francis, 1997), nos 150-98.

[242] An example is the Pastoral Institute of AMECEA in Gaba, Uganda.

model of Vatican II.[243] Though official church documents and many theologians continue to present (with varying selectivity and combinations) church as 'people of God', sacrament, institution, servant and herald, most often these models are presented as secondary to the communion model.[244] The next section elaborates more on the primary model of the church as communion. Meanwhile, we identify what could probably be seen as an example of what Gaillardetz calls the 'first moment' of reception, namely, the call by the fathers of the first Special Assembly for Africa of the Synod of Bishops to contextualize the church as communion as 'family of God' in Africa. This was re-echoed by Pope John Paul II in his post-synodal apostolic exhortation, *Ecclesia in Africa* (no. 63).[245]

Some further indications of the above 'first moment' reception of the ecclesiology of Vatican of II could be seen in the works of the successors of John Paul II. For instance, in the very first encyclical letter of Pope Benedict XVI, he perceives the church as 'God's family in the world.'[246] Then in his apostolic exhortation following the *second* Special Assembly for Africa of the Synod of Bishops, Benedict XVI stresses the point that the model of *family of God* is not only appropriate for the church in Africa but for the whole universal church.[247] It is also significant that the first model that Pope Francis uses in his recent series of catechesis on the mystery of the church is the *family of God*. In the first place, he perceives the church in the broader spectrum of the divine plan for humanity. Then, making use of the parable of the prodigal son, the pope says that God's plan 'is to

[243] Routhier, 'La ricezione dell'ecclesiologia del Vaticano II', pp. 12-4 ; Calabrese, 'Chiesa come "popolo di Dio" o chiesa "comunione"?', pp. 74-5.
[244] There are, however, a minority of theologians who still see the church as primarily 'people of God' or 'sacrament' (*cf*. subsection 1.5.4). In addition to theologians mentioned already, we wish to mention Giovanni Mazzillo as one of the contemporary theologians who still privileges the category of 'people of God' (Mazzillo, 'Chiesa come "popolo di Dio" o chiesa come "comunione"?' in Associazione Teologica Italiana, *La chiesa e il Vaticano II*, pp. 47-62). However, the contribution of Gianfranco Calabrese on a similar topic in the same book argues in favour of the contemporary general view that 'church as communion' is the primary model of Vatican II (Calabrese, 'Chiesa come "popolo di Dio" o chiesa "comunione"?', pp. 63-113).
[245] The church as *family of God* has been elaborated on in chapters six and seven of this study.
[246] Benedict XVI, Encyclical Letter, *Deus caritas est*, 25 December 2005 (Vatican: LEV, 2006), no. 25.
[247] Benedict XVI, Apostolic Exhortation, *Africae munus*, 19 November 2011 (Vatican: LEV, 2011), no. 7.

make of all of us the *one family of his children*, in which each will feel close and feel loved by him, as in the gospel parable, that each may feel the warmth of being the *family of God*.'[248] Furthermore, recalling that the Greek term for church, *ekklēsia*, means 'convocation', Pope Francis explains that 'God summons us; he urges us to come out of our individualism, of our tendency to close in upon ourselves and calls us to be his *family*. …In the *family of God,* in the church, the lifeblood is the love of God that is expressed in loving him and others, all without distinctions and without measure. The *church is a family* in which one loves and is loved.'[249]

Now, with regard to the reception of the ecclesiology of Vatican II in practice, we focus on that of the primary model of communion, since what we have said in the previous phases concerning the practical receptions of the other models still holds. In this phase, besides the synods held on the universal church level, there emerged synods on the continental/regional levels (in Africa, Europe, Asia, Latin America, North America, etc.). Also, there seems to be the popularity of diocesan synods since the continental ones took place.

On the other hand, the consultative nature of the regional synods (like the synods on the universal level) seems to render the synodal instrumentality of the collegial action of the bishops with the pope less effective. Secondly, John Paul II's apostolic letter, *Apostolos suos* (1998) seems to give an official endorsement to the dwindling significance of the theological and juridical nature of episcopal conferences.[250] Thirdly, although lay and

[248] Pope Francis, General Audience on 29 May 2013, http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/francesco/audiences/2013/documents/papa-francesco_20130529_udienza-generale_en.html (accessed on 5 August 2013).
[249] Francis, General Audience on 29 May 2013.
[250] John Paul II, Apostolic Letter, *Apostolos suos*, 21 May 1998; this is a *motu proprio* letter on 'The Theological and Juridical Nature of Episcopal Conferences'. Ladislas Orsy critiques this apostolic letter, especially its no. 13 and the first article of its 'Complementary Norms Regarding the Conferences of Bishops' [Orsy, *Receiving the Council: Theological and Canonical Insights and Debates* (Collegeville: Liturgical, 2009), pp. 16-22; *cf*. Melloni, 'Breve guida ai giudizi sul Vaticano II', p. 119; *cf*. B. Hearne, 'Vatican II's Vision and AMECEA's Reality', *AFER* 28 (1986), p. 32].

religious representatives participate fully in a diocesan synod, the consultative nature of its deliberations (can. 466) seems to make it merely 'a debating society' of the elite of the diocesan clergy and some privileged religious and lay faithful.

The above notwithstanding, some structural reforms of church governance (which aim at more participation by the lay faithful as the communion ecclesiology warrants) decreed or recommended by the 1983 *Code of Canon Law* have taken place to some extent in this fourth phase. On the level of the local churches across the world, generally many of the diocesan and parish councils and committees have been established. However, in some cases their functioning leaves much to be desired: such situations may be analogous to an old car engine in a new car body; for bishops in some dioceses and priests in some parishes have established the new (participatory) councils and committees, but they still use the pre-conciliar top-down approach to leadership.[251]

While some formal structures of governance have been established but are not functioning satisfactorily, informal structures (SCCs) and movements (e.g. Charismatic Movement) that foster participation in communion and mission are growing among especially the lay faithful.[252] With the subsequent approval of these latter ecclesial experiences by bishops (e.g. 1994 Africa Synod recommending the formation of SCCs), they could be seen as examples of the 'first moment' of reception by bishops.

Another significant ecclesial event in this phase of reception is the publication of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (1992) by John Paul II. Published following a request by

[251] *cf*. A. Hastings, 'The Council Came to Africa' in A. Stacpoole (ed.), *Vatican II: By Those Who Were There* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1986), p. 322; *cf*. Orobator, 'After All, Africa is Largely a Non-literate Continent', p. 293.
[252] *cf*. Provost, 'Structuring the Church', pp. 192-3.

the fathers of the 1985 Synod,[253] one would have expected the *Catechism* to privilege the model of the church as communion. However, it presents several models of the church, including that of 'communion', but without considering it as the primary model. Furthermore, if the position of an ecclesiological perspective in the *Catechism*'s presentation is significant, then one could say that the *Catechism* seems to privilege the church as 'people of God'; otherwise it merely describes the church as a mystery which should be comprehended by a multiple of models.[254] Could the apparent reluctance to privilege 'church as communion' be due to the fact that *Communionis notio, Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on Some Aspects of the Church Understood as Communion* (1992) has raised some concerns about certain misinterpretations of *koinōnia*?[255]

2.5 Post-Conciliar Development of Ecclesiology of Communion

In view of articulating a systematic multi-faceted ecclesiology in which the 'church as communion' is considered as the primary model, this section looks at the development of the reception of the communion ecclesiology of Vatican II. It considers: (a) the state of reception prior to the 1985 Synod, (b) the teachings of the synod and of the pope (John Paul II) of the synod, (c) some post-synodal theological works till the publication of *Communionis notio*, (d) *Communionis notio* and Ratzinger, and (e) some theological works since *Communionis notio* was published.

[253] John Paul II, Apostolic Constitution, *Fidei Depositum*, 11 October 1992 in *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed. (Vatican: LEV, 1997), p. 3.
[254] In this regard, Calabese says that the *Catechism* is faithful to the intention of Vatican II and the formulations of *Lumen gentium* in particular (Calabrese, 'Chiesa come "popolo di Dio" o chiesa "comunione"?', p. 89).
[255] Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Communionis notio, Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on Some Aspects of the Church Understood as Communion*, 28 May 1992. This document, which was published about five months before the publication of the *Catechism*, is considered in subsections 2.5.5-2.5.6.

2.5.1 Prior to the 1985 Synod of Bishops

This subsection looks at the works of Paul VI and some theologians whose pioneering works directly or indirectly contributed to the 1985 Synod's consideration of the 'church as communion' as the primary ecclesiological model. In this respect, there is also a presentation on the meaning of the term *koinōnia* as expatiated by two theologians of this period.

(a) The Pioneers and Pope Paul VI

While the theologies of the church as 'people of God' and as 'sacrament' were dominating in Catholic circles in the two decades that followed Vatican II,[256] theologians like Congar and Hamer, who even before and during Vatican II comprehended the mystery of the church primarily as communion, would continue to promote the communion model. Also Pope Paul VI, who while Vatican II was in progress made occasional remarks on the church as communion, would continue to develop his thoughts on the church as communion in the post-conciliar era.[257]

Paul VI seemed to have been influenced by the communion ecclesiology of Hamer.[258] However, the pope did not simply embrace the communion ecclesiology of Hamer; he developed his own thoughts on the vision of the church as communion. This is particularly evident in his post-conciliar works. Renato Marangoni observes, for instance,

[256] Ratzinger, 'Alcuni aspetti della chiesa', p. 57; Dianich et al, *Trattato sulla chiesa*, p. 153.

[257] For instance, during an audience which took place a few weeks before the promulgation of *Lumen gentium*, Pope Paul VI spoke of the church as *communion*: Paul VI, Audience, 'Vi porgiamo', 28 October 1964, http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/paul_vi/audiences/documents/hf_p-vi_aud_19641028_it.html (accessed on 11 October 2013).

[258] With regard to Hamer's influence on the thoughts of the pope, it could be noted that the latter often cited the book of Hamer entitled, *L'Église est une communion* (Paris: Cerf, 1962); the English translation is: *The Church is a Communion* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1964). Renato Marangoni attests to Hamer's influence on the pope's thoughts in his extensive study of the contribution of Paul VI in the elaboration of the ecclesiology of communion [Marangoni, *La chiesa mistero di comunione: Il contributo di Paolo VI nell'elaborazione dell' ecclesiologia di comunione*, *1963-1978* (Roma: Gregoriana, 2001); see especially, pp. 165-71].

that Paul VI and Hamer presented diverse articulations on the relationship between the concept of unity and that of communion. On the one hand, for Hamer, communion is the proper form of the church.[259] On the other hand, for Paul VI, unity is the more authentic and reliable expression of an essential property of the church – that of being communion.[260]

Furthermore, in the light of Vatican II,[261] Paul VI perceives the life and activity of the church as inscribed in the mystery of the communion of the Holy Trinity in such a way that they become a manifestation of the triune God. Firstly, he explains that to enter into the church means to have a participation in the divine life, which is the communion of the Father with the Son in the Holy Spirit. Secondly, with regard to its christological aspect, he says that to be part of the church means that one becomes a member of body of Christ. And thirdly, concerning its pneumatological aspect, he teaches that the Holy Spirit is the life (vital) principle of the church. Being the bond of divine love, says the pope, the Holy Spirit unites all members of the body of Christ, while giving them diverse functions.[262]

The comprehension of the mystery of the church in the light of the most ancient and fundamental Christian mystery of the Holy Trinity has become prominent in Catholic ecclesiology since Vatican II.[263] Gisbert Greshake, who says that the mystery of the Holy

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[259] Hamer, *The Church is a Communion*, p. 209; *cf*. Marangoni, *La chiesa mistero di comunione*, p. 170. Marangoni made use of second edition of the Italian version of Hamer's book mentioned above: *La chiesa è una comunione* (Brescia: Morcelliana, 1983), p. 217.

[260] Paul VI, *Allocutio*, 'Eccoci ancora', 8 June 1974, AAS LXVI (1974), p. 384; Marangoni, *La chiesa mistero di comunione*, pp. 170-1.

[261] *cf*. LG 4; UR 2.

[262] Marangoni, *La chiesa mistero di comunione*, pp. 559, 563-4. In the light of Vatican II, the pope related the model of the church as communion with other theologies of the church: church as institution, as body of Christ, and as people of God. He conceived the church as being both spiritual and visible, as being human but animated by the action of the Holy Spirit [Paul VI, General Audience, 'Anche a voi', 18 August 1976, http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/paul_vi/audiences/1976/documents/hf_p-vi_aud_19760818_it.html (accessed on 11 October 2013); *cf.* General Audience, 'Uno dei caratteri', 2 June 1970, http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/paul_vi/audiences/1970/documents/hf_p-vi_aud_19700602_it.html (accessed on 11 October 2013)].

[263] G. Canobbio, 'La Trinità e la chiesa' in O.F. Piazza (ed.), *La Trinità e la chiesa : In dialogo con Giacomo Canobbio* (Cinisello Balsamo : San Paolo, 2006), pp. 25-77; Calabrese, 'Chiesa come "popolo di Dio" o chiesa "comunione"?', pp. 66-7, 91-6.

Trinity is the key for understanding the entirety of reality or creation,[264] affirms this, noting that it is now common to refer to the church as the 'icon of the Trinity'.[265] The church, Greshake holds, is the image, fruit and the sphere of the trinitarian action inasmuch as it is the people of God, of the Father, who through Christ and the Holy Spirit gathers together human beings, making them his people.[266] Greshake's reference to the church as the 'sphere' of the trinitarian action, however, might need some qualification. Probably, it might be better to speak of the church as the 'ordinary' or 'principal' sphere of the trinitarian action, as the triune God does and can act outside the confines of the church. There is also another statement of Greshake which might need to be nuanced: he refers to the Holy Trinity as the 'archetypical image' (*immagine archetipica*) of the church.[267] We are of the opinion that though, in a sense, the Trinity could be referred to as the 'archetype' of the church, it sounds incorrect to refer to the original reality (Trinity) as the *image* of that which is its reflection (the church).

The above observations notwithstanding, it could be said that generally the 'trinitarian key' for understanding the church (specifically as communion) is so well incorporated in the works of many post-conciliar Catholic theologians such that it was not among the 'errors' that the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith sought to address with its issuance of the document, *Communionis notio*. The use of the trinitarian key is evident

[264] G. Greshake, *Il Dio Unitrino: Teologia trinitaria* (Brescia: Queriniana, 2008), p. 18; the original German edition is: Greshake, *Der dreieine Gott: Eine trinitarische Theologie* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1997).
[265] Greshake, *Il Dio Unitrino*, pp. 430-1. Some earlier works in which the church is seen as an 'icon of the Trinity' include the following: H. de Lubac, *Cattolicismo* (Milan: Jaca Book, 1978), the original German version was published in 1970; Y. Congar, 'Implicazioni cristologiche e pneumatologiche dell'ecclesiologia del Vaticano II' in G. Alberigo (ed.), *L'ecclesiologia del Vaticano II: dinamismi e prospettive* (Bologna: Dehoniane, 1981), pp. 97-110; M.-D. Chenu, 'La nuova coscienza del fondamento trinitario della chiesa', *Concilium* 6 (1981), pp. 34-47; B. Forte, *La chiesa icona della Trinità* (Brescia: Queriniana, 1984); W. Kasper, *Theology and Church* (New York: Crossroad, 1989), especially pp.150-3. Almost invariable these authors refer to LG 4 and UR 2, noting the explicit citation of Cyprian in the former conciliar text.
[266] Greshake, *Il Dio Unitrino*, p. 431.
[267] Greshake, *Il Dio Unitrino*, p. 436.

in the works of most of the theologians who have been featured in the remainder of this section.

(b) What is the Meaning of *Koinōnia*?

The Latin text of Vatican II uses the term *communio* as the translation of the Greek word *koinōnia* (found in the New Testament). And the English word 'communion' is the translation of Latin term *communio*. Vatican II did not however define the term *communio* (*koinōnia*) and neither do we find a biblical exegetical explanation of the term in official church documents that were published in the decade after the council. An exegetical-ecclesiological work by Bori in 1972 would aid to clarify this term. He prefaced his contribution with the examination of studies done in New Testament scholarship and ecclesiology on the term *koinōnia* from the beginning of the twentieth century to the end of Vatican II (1965).[268] We wish to give highlights of Bori's conclusions here. Firstly, he stated that the term *koinōnia* (communion) was already in use in the Hellenistic world; however, the Christian usage of the term in the New Testament has some unique characteristics. Secondly the originality of the Christian understanding of *koinōnia* includes the fact that it was used in constant reference to the reality of Christian revelation and experience.[269]

Thirdly, the originality of the multi-faceted content of the term include: (a) the communion with God in the New Testament is *mediated* through his Son Jesus Christ (*cf*. John 1:18); (b) the mediation is realized specifically through the paschal mystery, which Christians participate in a special way through the eucharist (*cf*. 1 Cor. 10: 16-17); (c) the

[268] P.C. Bori, *Koinōnia: L'idea della comunione nell'ecclesiologia recente e nel Nuovo Testamento* (Brescia: Paideia, 1972), pp. 38-44. Some of the scholars who had preceded him in the exegetical study of the term and whose works he examined included C.A. Anderson Scott, J.A. Campbell, E.P. Groenewald, H. Seesemann, R.H. Flew, L.S. Thorton, V. Taylor and F. Hauck.
[269] Bori, *Koinōnia*, p. 114.

communion has a *visible*, *ecclesial* and *operative* dimension (*cf*. Rom. 15:23; 2 Cor. 8:4; Gal. 2:9; Phil. 1:5); (d) nonetheless, the visible aspect is a mere manifestation and verification of the more important communion with the Father through Jesus Christ (*cf*. 1 John 1:3-7) in the Holy Spirit;[270] (e) the communion among the faithful includes sharing in the same spiritual goods; and (f) the final point, which in a way sums up all the others, is that the communion is a *dialectic* relationship: the union does not obliterate the distinction among the subjects of the relationship, and neither does the distinction damage the union. So if there is any *proprium* of the Christian *koinōnia*, says Bori, it is in the fact that it supposes and affirms simultaneously the *distinction* and *relation* of the subjects (God and man) of the communion.[271]

Bori concluded his work acknowledging that his study was not exhaustive.[272] Ettore Franco is one of the scholars who have taken up the task of developing further the exegetical work of Bori.[273] On the one hand, Franco basically shares in the conclusions of Bori. On the other hand, observing some incoherency in Bori's methodology and his concentration on only those New Testament texts that contain the term *koinōnia*, Franco says a greater methodological coherence and a more attentive and complete analysis of all texts with terms derived from the root term *koinōn-* could lead to a more precise

[270] Bori states that neither the notion of a 'centre of communion' nor the idea of a bond of institutional communion that establishes and guarantees the relationship with God through Christ emerges in the New Testament in the contexts in which *koinōnia* is used. He, however, adds that this issue is dealt with on a bigger scale since it involves the problem of its normativity (Bori, *Koinōnia*, p. 118).
[271] Bori, *Koinōnia*, pp. 106, 114-9
[272] Also, Bori indicates that there is need for a substantive study of the concept of *koinōnia* in the sub-apostolic era: *Koinōnia*, p. 121.
[273] Though Ettore Franco's thesis was completed before the 1985 Synod, it was officially published in 1986 [Franco, *Comunione e partecipazione: La koinōnia nell'epistolario paolino* (Brescia: Morcelliana, 1986)]. In his study, Franco reviewed some exegetical works on *koinōnia* that preceded that of Bori, as well as some works that were published after Bori's.

comprehension of the importance and development of the New Testament conception of communion.[274]

We see that Franco is more explicit or precise than Bori in stating the following: (a) that *koinōnia* implies that 'interpersonal relationship' that God himself has given and gives in Christ, through the Holy Spirit, to make human beings *participate in his very life and love*; (b) that such communion is born not from below, but it is and remains always a *revelation and gift from above*;[275] and (c) that *koinōnia* has both vertical and horizontal dimensions. Furthermore, Franco provides some insights that do not seem to have been articulated by Bori: (a) the interpersonal relationship of 'communion-participation' is possible *only in Jesus Christ*, because he alone is *both God and man*; and (b) consequently, to the paschal mystery which Bori mentions as the event that has established the 'communion-participation', Franco adds the mystery of the incarnation.[276]

Others have advanced further the studies of Bori and Franco. However, besides the fact that Bori's work began and Franco's concluded the period (1970-1985) under consideration, we see them as providing sufficient background for the understanding of the biblical concept of *koinōnia,*[277] unto which we can present the ecclesiological works that followed the 1985 Synod.

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[274] Franco, *Comunione e partecipazione*, pp. 11-2. Franco refers to an earlier critique of Bori by J.M. McDermott, 'The Biblical Doctrine of *Koinōnia*', *Biblische Zeitschrift*, 19 (1975), pp. 64-77, esp. p.65 (see Franco, *Comunione e partecipazione*, p. 11).

[275] Greshake, *Il Dio Unitrino*, pp. 449-50.

[276] Franco, *Comunione e partecipazione*, pp. 293-5.

[277] Severino Dianich seems to prefer the work of George Panikulam [*Koinōnia in the New Testament: A Dynamic Expression of Christian Life* (Rome: Biblical Institute, 1979)] to those of Bori and Franco [*cf.* Dianich, *Ecclesiologia: Questioni di metodo e una proposta* (Cinisello Balsamo: Paoline, 1993), p. 123; *cf.* Dianich et al, *Trattato sulla chiesa*, p. 168]. We, however, agree with Franco's critique of Panikulam's study. On the one hand, the overall vision presented by Panikulam is interesting, especially the dynamic unifying aspect that includes in the *koinōnia* the whole of the Christian life. On the other hand, says Franco, probably a philological and exegetical analysis more thorough and precise in dialogue with the solutions of preceding studies, which Panikulam supposed but rarely verified, and the inclusion of the other terms of the root-term *koinōn-*, with a greater and more careful reading of the contexts examined, together with a more precise and

2.5.2 1985 Synod of Bishops

The efforts of Congar, Hamer, Bori and others seem to have prepared the ground for the1985 Synod of Bishops in Rome, which became the turning point for giving prominence to the model of the church as communion in Catholic ecclesiology. As was obvious in our consideration of the ecclesiology of Vatican II in chapter one, though the council does not develop a systematic 'communion ecclesiology', the term *communio* appears in several conciliar documents, encompassing and effectively integrating many of the aspects of its 'mosaic' ecclesiology.[278] Ratzinger affirms this: the term *communio* contains many aspects of the life of the church. Or better still, *all* the richness of the ecclesial life appears in this word.[279] The realization of this fact would lead the fathers of the 1985 Synod to state that the 'ecclesiology of communion is the central and fundamental idea' of the documents of Vatican II. In addition, they present the term in a way that is expressive of the trinitarian nature of the church: 'Fundamentally, it is a matter of communion with God through Christ in the Holy Spirit.' [280]

2.5.3 Pope John Paul II

Two years after the Synod, John Paul II would give a magisterial affirmation to the primacy of the ecclesiological model of communion, by seeing it as being 'at the heart of the church's self-understanding'.[281] He explains this further in his apostolic exhortation,

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independent personal position could have given to his conclusions a more valid support (Franco, *Comunione e partecipazione*, pp. 15-6).

[278] *cf*. J.J. Markey, *Creating Communion: The Theology of the Constitutions of the Church* (New York: New City, 2003), pp. 22-3.

[279] 'Il termine contiene tanti aspetti della vita della chiesa. Anzi in questa parola appare "tutta" la ricchezza della vita ecclesiale' (Ratzinger, 'Alcuni aspetti della chiesa', p. 59).

[280] Second Extraordinary Synod of Bishops, *Relatio Finalis*: 'The Church, in the Word of God, Celebrates the Mysteries of Christ for the Salvation of the World', Rome 1985, II.C.1, in J. Neuner & J. Dupuis (eds), *The Christian Faith: In the Doctrinal Documents of the Catholic Church* (New York: Alba House, 2001), no. 891; *cf*. Greshake, *Il Dio Unitrino*, pp. 442-3.

[281] John Paul II, 'Address to the Bishops of the United States of America', 16 September 1987, no. 1, in *Insegnamenti di Giovanni Paolo II*, vol. 10, 3 (1987), p. 553.

Christifideles laici. He begins with the vinedresser-vine-branches imagery of Jesus (John 15:1-5): 'These simple words reveal the mystery of communion that serves as the unifying bond between the Lord and his disciples.' Thus, rightly giving priority to its vertical dimension, the pope goes on to explain that the Holy Trinity is the source, model, means and end of the ecclesial communion:

> The communion of Christians with Jesus has the communion of God as Trinity namely the unity of the Son to the Father in the gift of the Holy Spirit, as its *model and source*, and is itself the *means* to achieve this communion: united to the Son in the Spirit's bond of love, Christians are united to the Father.… In this communion is the wonderful reflection and *participation* in the mystery of the life of love in God as Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.… *Such communion is the very mystery of the church*.[282]

Consequently, the pope gives the horizontal dimension of communion its appropriate secondary place: 'from the communion that Christians experience in Christ there immediately flows the communion with one another: all are branches of a single vine, namely, Christ.'[283]

2.5.4 Some Post-Synodal Theological Works (1985-1992)

Some Catholic theologians, like Severino Dianich,[284] who perceived the church as primarily 'communion' even before the 1985 Synod, have continued to do so thereafter. Besides them, many more Catholic theologians, inspired by the said synod, have embraced the communion ecclesiology since the 1985 Synod. Among them, those who, in our opinion have articulated, to a large extent, sound ecclesiologies based on 'communion' as the primary church model include Walter Kasper, Jean-Marie R. Tillard and Joseph Ratzinger.

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[282] John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation, *Christifideles laici*, 30 December 1988, no. 18, AAS 81 (1989), pp. 421-2.
[283] *Christifideles laici*, no. 18.
[284] Dianich's first monograph (*La chiesa mistero di comunione*) on communion-based ecclesiology was published in 1975.

(a) Severino Dianich

Severino Dianich prefers to use the following hypothesis as his point of departure: that the most primordial and simplest conceptualization by which the church perceived herself at the moment of her origin could, theologically speaking, most likely be the central idea of the whole of ecclesiology. In this regard, he says, the 'communion-born-from-proclamation' was the first or original Christian experience of *being church*. He finds the prologue of 1 John as very expressive of this primal conceptualization of the church: in this Johannine text, the church is seen as the event which is realized when the good news of Christ is proclaimed: from the proclamation, a *communion of faith* is given birth to.[285]

In a recent ecclesiological treatise, Dianich co-authored with Serena Noceti, the 'communion of faith' is portrayed as having various dimensions. These are classified into three main categories: *theo*-logical, eschatological and ecclesiological.[286] In the first place, priority is rightly given to the *theo*-logical or vertical dimension of communion. That is, the mystery of the church involves first and foremost a calling into a particular relationship with God. Dianich and Noceti further explain that in the original experience of the church, the disciples of Jesus felt called by God: the *ekklēsia* in which they found themselves is a convocation from above. And it is trinitarian in character, because the New Testament speaks in the same breath of a call to communion with the Father through the Son (1 John 1:3); of the 'faithful' God (Father) who calls us into 'communion of his Son' (1 Cor. 1:8-9); and of 'communion of the Holy Spirit' (2 Cor. 13:13).[287] Secondly, they explain that the eschatological dimension concerns the future realization of the full communion with the

[285] Dianich, *La chiesa mistero di comunione*, 5th ed. (Genova: Marietti, 1987), pp. 7, 46-57.
[286] Dianich et al, *Trattato sulla chiesa*, pp. 168-75. In an earlier work, Dianich presented four dimensions of communion: theo-logical, eschatological, trinitarian and ecclesiological (Dianich, *Ecclesiologia: Questioni di metodo*, pp. 130-8). The categorization is preceded by a brief presentation on the biblical meaning of *koinōnia*; here Dianich makes references to the works of Bori, Franco and Panikulam.
[287] Dianich et al, *Trattato sulla chiesa*, pp. 169-72.

triune God. It is therefore the point of arrival of the church.[288] Thirdly, the ecclesiological or horizontal dimension, which derives from God's election and grace, is secondary to the *theo*-logical dimension.[289]

Furthermore, observing that sometimes the terms 'communion' and 'community' are wrongly used as synonyms, Dianich and Noceti explain that though these terms are closely related they need to be distinguished: 'communion' is a gift from God, a supernatural force, a dynamic principle; whereas 'community' indicates that which is the effect of the 'communion' – the birth of a new historical collective subject in the panorama of the human story.[290]

(b) Walter Kasper

Unlike Dianich whose appreciation of the church as communion began in the 1970's, Walter Kasper's choice of 'communion' as the primary model of the church began when he was preparing for the 1985 Synod, to which he had been appointed as theologian-secretary by John Paul II. Carefully studying again the documents of Vatican II, Kasper came to the realization that the ecclesiology of *communio* constitutes the impulse and the fundamental theme (motif) of the conciliar ecclesiology. Since the synod, then, the model of the church as communion has become determinant for him.[291]

With regard to contents of their ecclesiologies, however, Kasper's is quite similar to that of Dianich and Noceti. In the first place, Kasper presents various dimensions of the mystery of the church as communion, privileging the vertical communion with God as the

[288] Dianich et al, *Trattato sulla chiesa*, pp. 172-5.
[289] Dianich et al, *Trattato sulla chiesa*, pp. 175-9.
[290] Dianich, *Ecclesiologia: Questioni di metodo*, pp. 117-21; Dianich et al, *Trattato sulla chiesa*, pp. 59-62, 203-12.
[291] Kasper, *Chiesa Cattolica*, pp. 40-2; Kasper, *La chiesa di Gesù Cristo: Scritti di ecclesiologia* (Brescia: Queriniana, 2011), pp. 22-3.

fundamental dimension. He explains that the communion is realized not from 'below', rather it is grace and gift, a common participation in the unique truth, in the unique life, in the unique love that God has communicated to us through Christ, in the Holy Spirit, through the word and sacrament.[292] The church is thus perceived as, first of all and ultimately, a participation in the life of the triune God, and it is compared with and elucidated by the mystery of the most primal communion of the Holy Trinity.[293] Therefore, in the light of the mystery of three Persons in one God, Kasper rightly holds that whereas the imperial conception of unity as uniformity has to be abandoned, we have to uphold unity in multiplicity and multiplicity in unity in the church. He adds that the fact of conceiving the church as 'icon of the Trinity' thus constitutes a guiding model of her unity in multiplicity and multiplicity in unity.[294] He, however, clarifies that this does not mean the patriarchal conception of unity and authority in the church is replaced by a fraternity understood in the democratic sense; and neither is an articulation of the church which borders on tri-theism (the doctrine of three gods) acceptable.[295]

Furthermore, Kasper notes that the trinitarian interpretation of the mystery of God and, in the light of God, of the church, is of fundamental importance in the Orthodox theology and has become determinant in post-conciliar Catholic theology.[296] He says, we can even say that the *mysterium* (mystery) of the church is her *communio* (communion),

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[292] Kasper, *La chiesa di Gesù Cristo*, pp. 368-9; *cf*. Greshake, *Il Dio Unitrino*, pp. 434, 449-50.

[293] After examining various documents of Vatican II, Kasper concludes: 'we can therefore sum up by saying that, according to the council, the mystery of the church means that in the Spirit we have access through Christ to the Father, so that in this way we may share in the divine nature. The communion of the church is prefigured, made possible and sustained by the communion of the Trinity. Ultimately, as the council says, echoing Cyprian, the martyr bishop, it is participation in the trinitarian communion itself (*Lumen gentium* 4; *Unitatis redintegratio* 2). The church is, as it were the *icon of the trinitarian fellowhip* of Father, Son and Holy Spirit' (Kasper, *Theology and Church*, p.152).

[294] Kasper, *Chiesa Cattolica*, p. 131. Making use of the concept of the *perichosis* of the Trinity, Greshake develops further the idea of 'unity in multiplicity and multlplicity in unity' in various areas of the church (e.g., 'identity and differences', 'particularity and generality', 'insitution and charisms', 'tradition amd inculturation') [Greshake, *Il Dio Unitrino*, pp. 437-55]. Some of his thoughts have been incorporated into the fourth chapter of this study.

[295] Kasper, *Chiesa Cattolica*, pp. 131-2.

[296] Kasper, *Chiesa Cattolica*, p. 128; *cf*. Kasper, *La chiesa di Gesù Cristo*, pp. 366-9.

because it is the sign-sacramental actualization of the trinitarian *communio*. *Communio* is the form that has mystery as its content.[297]

Now let us look at Kasper's articulation of the horizontal dimension of communion. In the first place he sees it as being multi-faceted. The church as *congregatio fidelium* (assembly of the faithful) and *communio sanctorum* (communion of saints) are among the various aspects of the horizontal dimension that he looks at. He clarifies that the *congregatio fidelium* or the communion among Christians derives from and, therefore, it is secondary to a more profound and fundamental communion, namely, the common participation of the Christians in Jesus Christ, in the Holy Spirit, in the gospel and, in a particular way, in the eucharist. To explain the second term, Kasper refers to 1 John 1, and continues: for this reason, *communio sanctorum* did not originally mean the communion of the saints, that is, of the faithful, and with the saints in heaven, but it meant communion with the holy 'things' (*sancta*), that is, the common participation in the goods of salvation. It is through this participation (which is itself rooted in participation in the divine life) that a fellowship (communion) is effected among the saints (Christians).[298]

With regard to the communion-community relationship, though Kasper, unlike Dianich and Noceti, does not explicitly distinguish between the two terms, he does so implicitly in several ways. In the first place, in line with the primacy of its vertical dimension, he says that *communion* in the New Testament and the church fathers is not primarily the *community* of the human members. That is, communion does not mean the network of interpersonal relationship, of reciprocal dedication and participation, and that atmosphere of human warmth and security among Christians. He continues: the original theological sense of *communion* is not that of *community*, rather it is the common

[297] Kasper, *La chiesa di Gesù Cristo*, p. 242.
[298] Kasper, *Chiesa Cattolica*, p. 182; Kasper, *La chiesa di Gesù Cristo*, p. 36.

participation in Jesus Christ.[299] Secondly, he makes another implicit distinction between the two terms when speaks of the fact that there seems to be a shift from the use of the term 'parish' to that of 'local community' – the latter is seen as more appropriate in referring to the concrete, local realization of the church as communion.[300] Finally, he says, the re-awaking of the human longing for fellowship/*community* after the First World War and thenceforth provided the historical preconditioning for Vatican II to make 'communion' as a leitmotif.[301]

(c) Jean-Marie R. Tillard

Jean-Marie R. Tillard has been one of the main proponents of communion-based ecclesiology since the 1985 Synod. Like Dianich, Noceti and Kasper, he holds the view that *communio* 'represents the horizontal line on which the major affirmations about the church and its mission stand out clearly.'[302] Perceiving the church, not just as a communion, but as a *communion of communions* has become his trademark:

> *Communion* with God (himself Trinitarian *communion*) in the benefits of salvation acquired by Christ (whose incarnation was a realistic *communion* between God and humanity) and given by his Spirit, fraternal *communion* of the baptized (recreating the connective tissue of torn apart humanity), all of it made possible by the *communion* in the once-and-for-all (irreversible) Event of Jesus Christ which *communion* in the apostolic witness guarantees throughout the centuries and which the eucharist celebrates (sacrament of *communion*). There is the church in its substance.[303]

Hence, on this earth, Tillard further explains, the one church of God is 'structured as a *church of churches*, each church being a *communion of communions*.'[304]

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[299] Kasper, *La chiesa di Gesù Christo*, p. 298.
[300] Kasper, *Chiesa Cattolica*, p. 444.
[301] Kasper, *Theology and Church*, p. 149.
[302] J.-M.R. Tillard, *Church of Churches: Ecclesiology of Communion* (Collegeville: Liturgical, 1992), p. xi; *cf.* Calabrese, 'Chiesa come "popolo di Dio" o chiesa "comunione"?', pp. 102-7.
[303] Tillard, *Church of Churches*, p. 319.
[304] Tillard, *Church of Churches*, p. 74.

Unlike Dianich and Noceti, Tillard does not seem to be preoccupied with an explicit clarification of the distinction between the terms 'communion' and 'community'. Rather more like Kasper, he makes an implicit distinction in his usage of the two terms. He sees the latter term as a visible, concrete (and often, localized) expression of the former.[305]

Furthermore, one could say that broadly speaking Tillard agrees with the other three theologians on the following: first, the vertical dimension of the church understood as communion is prior to the horizontal dimension; second, perceived as part of the horizontal dimension, the hierarchy is seen as an important yet a secondary aspect of the church;[306] third, the model of the church as communion is articulated in connection with other theologies of the church – as sacrament, people of God, body of Christ, etc.;[307] fourth, in the communion ecclesiology, the eucharist and the episcopate are interrelated;[308] and fifth, the universal church is not seen as a product of a federation of local churches, rather the universal church and local churches are perceived as being mutually inclusive.[309]

Other Catholic theologians, however, articulate versions of communion ecclesiology with positions that appear contrary to the above points which are common to Dianich, Noceti, Kasper and Tillard. Such positions would be considered as erroneous by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF),[310] headed by the then Cardinal Joseph

[305] Tillard, *Church of Churches*, p. 74.
[306] Tillard, *Church of Churches*, pp. 31, 48-51.
[307] Tillard, *Church of Churches*, pp. 20-9, 83-168.
[308] Tillard, *Church of Churches*, pp. 37-41, 164-8, 184-9.
[309] However, the details of their elaborations on how the universal and local churches 'mutually inclusive' seem to differ: see Dianich et al, *Trattato sulla chiesa*, pp. 351-63; Kasper, *Theology and Church*, pp. 156-61; and Tillard, *Church of Churches*, pp. 28-31, 223, 257-62.
[310] Some works of Hans Küng and Leonardo Boff were considered as containing errors by the CDF. For CDF's criticism of Küng see *The Küng Dialogue: Facts and Documents* (Washington DC: United State Catholic Conference, 1980); and for CDF's criticism of Boff see 'Doctrinal Congregation Criticizes Brazilian Theologian's Book', *Origins* 14 (April, 1985), pp. 683-7. Vatican comments on the silencing of Boff are found in *Origins* 15 (May 1985), p. 18 and *Origins* 21 (May 1991), p. 42 (Doyle, *Communion Ecclesiology*, pp. 119-27).

Ratzinger.[311] In response to such errors, the CDF would issue the document, *Communionis notio*. The next subsection looks at these errors and the response by the CDF.

2.5.5 *Communionis notio* (1992) and Joseph Ratzinger

Some key features of Ratzinger's communion ecclesiology can be found in CDF's *Communionis notio*.[312] According to him, the CDF did not intend to articulate a comprehensive systematic communion ecclesiology but to address those insufficient interpretations of this ecclesiology found in the works of various scholars; hence its title, *Some Aspects of the Church Understood as Communion*.[313] The introduction of *Communionis notio* makes quite evident the intention of the CDF to follow the teachings of Vatican II and the 1985 Synod:

> The concept of *communion* (*koinōnia*), which appears with a certain prominence in the texts of the Second Vatican Council,[314] *is very suitable for expressing the core of the mystery of the church*, and can certainly be a *key for the renewal of Catholic ecclesiology*.[315] A deeper appreciation of the fact that the church is a communion is, indeed, a *task of special importance*, which provides ample latitude for theological reflection on the mystery of the church.[316]

Communionis notio is divided into five chapters. The title of the first chapter sounds like that of *Lumen gentium*: 'The Church, Mystery of Communion' (nos 3-6). The first error of inadequate incorporation of other notions of the church into communion

[311] Ratzinger was elected pope and he reigned as Pope Benedict XVI for the period: 2005-2013. As a pope, Ratzinger's thoughts on church as communion were much the same as in his theological writings prior to his election. We examined particularly his series of weekly catechesis on the mystery of the church delivered during the general audiences between 15 March and 22 November 2006 [see http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/audiences/2006/documents/hf_ben-xvi_aud_20060315_en.html to …/hf_ben-xvi_aud _20061122_en.html (accessed on 28 August 2013)].

[312] In a symposium following the publication of *Communionis notio*, Ratzinger enumerated the five errors which the documented addressed, adding that some of these deficiencies in interpretations were more evident in ecumenical discussions (Ratzinger, 'Alcuni aspetti della chiesa', p. 60).

[313] Ratzinger, 'Alcuni aspetti della chiesa', p. 60.

[314] Here the CDF supports its assertion by endnote references from Vatican II documents: LG 4, 8, 13-15, 18, 21, 24-25; DV 10; GS 32; UR 2-4, 14-15, 17-19, 22.

[315] Here CDF makes an endnote reference to Synod of Bishops, Second Extraordinary Assembly (1985), *Relatio finalis*, II, C, 1.

[316] *Communionis notio*, no. 1. In its paragraph no. 3 the document indicates the biblical and patristic roots of the 'church as communion', and cites John Paul II's statement on the importance of this ecclesiology.

ecclesiology is addressed in this chapter. Dealing with a mystery, the ecclesiology of communion should adequately incorporate other notions of the church. Those specifically mentioned are church as 'people of God', 'body of Christ' and 'sacrament' (nos 1, 3-4).

The second kind of inadequate articulation of communion ecclesiology which overemphasizes the horizontal dimension is also addressed in the first chapter. The mystery of the church, the documents right notes, has both vertical and horizontal dimensions. Following Vatican II, the 1985 Synod and John Paul II, *Communionis notio* gives priority to the vertical dimension: 'It is essential to the Christian understanding of *communion* that it be recognised above all as a gift from God, as a fruit of God's initiative carried out in the paschal mystery.' Again in line with the preceding magisterial teaching, *Communionis notio* mentions the trinitarian character of the vertical dimension of communion: 'it is the mystery of the personal union of each human being with the divine Trinity' (no. 3). Only in this light then does the horizontal dimension have its proper place: 'The new relationship between [human] and God that has been established in Christ and is communicated through the sacraments, also extends to a new relationship among human beings' (no. 3).

To address the type of communion ecclesiology which is anti-hierarchical in approach, *Communionis notio* explains that the communion of the church has, not only vertical and horizontal dimensions, but invisible and visible aspects as well:

> In the church on earth, there is an intimate relationship between this invisible communion and the visible communion in the teaching of the Apostles, in the sacraments and in the hierarchical order. By means of these divine gifts, which are very visible realities, Christ carries out in different ways in history his prophetical, priestly and kingly *function* for the salvation of mankind (no. 4).

So, though secondary in nature, the hierarchical order is an important part of the visible aspect of the church as communion; any adequate articulation of the church as communion

must include it. In its subsequent chapters, *Communionis notio* mentions some specific roles of the pope, the college of bishops and individual bishops in their respective dioceses.

The second chapter of *Communionis notio* addresses the problem of the relationship between the universal church and particular churches (nos 7-10).[317] Referring to LG 23, the CDF observed that some have interpreted it to mean that 'every particular church is a subject complete in itself, and that the universal church is the result of a *reciprocal recognition* on the part of the particular churches' (no. 8). By such an interpretation, 'the idea of a "communion of particular churches" is presented in such a way as to weaken the concept of the unity of the church at the visible and institutional level' (no. 8). To correct such an error, the CDF states:

> In order to grasp the true meaning of the analogical application of the term *communion* to the particular churches taken as a whole, one must bear in mind above all that the particular churches, insofar as they are *"part of the one church of Christ"* (CD 6), have a special relationship of *"mutual interiority"*[318] with the whole, that is, with the universal church, because in every particular church *"the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church of Christ is truly present and active"* (CD 11). For this reason, the universal church ... is a reality *ontologically and temporally* prior to every *individual* particular church (no. 9).

However, the statement on the *ontologically and temporally* priority of the universal church over the particular churches received immediate sharp reactions from some theologians.[319]

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[317] Calabrese, 'Chiesa come "popolo di Dio" o chiesa "comunione"?', pp. 76-7.

[318] John Paul II, 'Address to the Roman Curia', 20 December 1990, no. 9, in *L'Osservatore Romano*, 21 December 1990, p. 5.

[319] Ratzinger, 'Alcuni aspetti della chiesa', pp. 64-5. The statement on the priority of the universal church over the particular church sparked a debate between Kasper, then bishop of Rottenburg-Stuttgart who later become the president of the Pontifical Council for Christian Unity, and Ratzinger. Their debate has been summarized by K. McDonnell, 'The Ratzinger/Kasper Debate: The Universal Church and Local Churches', *Theological Studies* 63 (2002), pp. 227-50. Kasper's reaction to *Communionis notio* was to express his concerns about the ontological and chronological priority ascribed to the universal church. Particularly, he questioned CDF's interpretation of the Pentecost event as narrated in Acts 2. He was of the opinion that on the day of Pentecost, the universal and local church of Jerusalem appeared as a single reality. Secondly, he noted that the priority that the CDF gives to the universal church could justify an excessive centralization of church authority in the papacy and the Roman curia. In his reply, Ratzinger, while acknowledging the tendency towards excessive centralization, held that this problem of jurisdiction and competence should be distinguished from the theological assertion of the priority of the universal church. In short, at the end of the debate, Kasper while acknowledging the pre-existence of the mystery of the church, insisted that this did not imply that a priority of the universal church over the local church, since the said mystery included both the universal and local church. Ratzinger on the other hand still held to his position of the priority of the universal church, not seeing his

And today, two decades after the intended solution by CDF, the debate on the problem of the relationship between the universal church and the particular churches is still ongoing.

Chapter three of *Communionis notio* continues to talk about the communion of churches, this time linking it with the eucharist and the episcopate (nos 11-14): 'Unity, or communion, between the particular churches in the universal church, is rooted not only in the same faith and in the common baptism, but above all in the eucharist and in the episcopate' (no. 11). And then, while noting the importance of the 'rediscovery of a *eucharistic ecclesiology*,' it decries the tendency to place 'unilateral emphasis on the principle of the local church' based on the eucharistic community (no. 11). To avoid such inadequate articulations, therefore, it should be appreciated that

> The unity of the eucharist and the unity of the episcopate *with Peter and under Peter* are not independent roots of the unity of the church, since Christ instituted the eucharist and the episcopate as essentially interlinked realities. The episcopate is *one*, just as the eucharist is *one*: the one sacrifice of the one Christ, dead and risen. The liturgy expresses this reality in various ways, showing, for example, that every celebration of the eucharist is performed in union not only with the proper bishop, but also with the pope, with the episcopal order, with all the clergy, and with the entire people (no. 14).

The unity and diversity aspect of the ecclesial communion is treated as the fourth chapter of *Communionis notio* (nos 15-16) and its final chapter deals with the issue of 'ecclesial communion and ecumenism' (nos 17-18). While having not addressed all the issues related to communion ecclesiology nor resolved all the issues it has addressed, we see *Communionis notio* as on the whole encouraging the use of *communio* as a key in Catholic ecclesiology, while calling attention to some pitfalls we should avoid in order to articulate a sound and comprehensive ecclesiology.

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position as contradicting the simultaneous existence of the universal and local church in history [R.R. Gaillardetz, *Ecclesiology for a Global Church: A People Called and Sent* (New York: Orbis, 2008), pp. 118-9; *cf*. Canobbio, 'L'attualità dell'ecclesiologia del Vaticano II', pp. 184-5].

2.5.6 Some Theological Works Since *Communionis notio* (1992)

Kasper, Tillard, Dianich, Ratzinger and others have continued to hold on to their versions of communion-based ecclesiology since the publication of *Communionis notio*. Therefore, here we rather wish to consider the works of some communion-based ecclesiologists who have emerged since *Communionis notio* was published. The presentation has been limited to the monographs of only three of these ecclesiologists: Jean Rigal, Dennis M. Doyle and John J. Markey.[320] The works of all these three theologians interact with the contents of *Communionis notio*.

(a) Jean Rigal

With regard to the first concern of *Communionis notio*, Jean Rigal's ecclesiology seems to link well the communion model with other theologies of the church. He sees 'communion' as a broadly inclusive ecclesial model which is able to combine together diverse and yet complementary expressions including the following: 'people of God', 'body of the Christ', 'living temple of the Spirit', 'bride of the Lord', 'God's house', 'holy city', 'chosen vineyard(vine)', 'mother of the living', and 'new Jerusalem'. He, however, rightly notes that the church as communion cannot be substituted purely and simply by anyone of these ecclesiological expressions.[321]

Secondly, in line with *Communionis notio*, Rigal, by the manner in which he articulates the trinitarian origin and nature of the church, gives priority to its vertical over

[320] A significant work in this era is the 2005 publication by the Associazione Teologica Italiana, *La chiesa e il Vaticano II: Problemi di ermeneutica and ricezione conciliare*. We have been referring to the articles of Routhier, Mazzillo, Calabrese and Canobbio in this publication. Therein are articles on the 'Universal Church and the Local Churches' (by D. Valentini and D. Vitali), 'The Holy Spirit: Principle of Unity of the Church' (by V. Maraldi), 'Vatican II: Ecumenical Dialogue and Reception' (by A. Maffeis) and 'The Laity in Vatican II: Hermeneutics of the Texts and Conciliar Reception' (by M. Vergottini).

[321] J. Rigal, *L'ecclésiologie de communion: Son évolution historique et ses fondements* (Paris: Cerf, 2000), p. 375; the first edition was published in 1997.

the horizontal dimension.[322] Thirdly, though he agrees with *Communionis notio* that a balanced ecclesiology should not be presented in an anti-hierarchical sense, he holds that the ecclesiological model of communion warrants a constant genuine renewal of the juridical-institutional structures of the church. In the absence of such a renewal, some historically outdated aspects of the visible church might be wrongly considered as 'traditions' that are valid for all times – to the detriment of the life and mission of the church.[323]

The fourth point regards the relationship between the universal church and the local churches. According to Rigal, the 1985 Synod evokes this relationship with the necessity of recognizing a legitimate pluralism within a church that is one and inseparable. He is of the opinion that *Communionis notio*, however, does not respond adequately to this synodal expectation.[324] For him, it is from the communal structure of the church that an adequate relationship between local churches and universal church could be defined and established. Like Kasper and others, Rigal says that this should not be understood in the sense of a priority of one or the other, but in terms of 'inclusion'. He explains further: the unity of the church does not build itself in the prescription of concentric circles, with Rome (or somewhere else) as the centre of gravity, but in a communion of churches. Hence, if one favours the global nature of the universal church or the autonomy of the local churches, he/she moves away inevitably from a real 'ecclesial communion'. The very fabric of the church is relational. Whether it is about the local reality or about the universal reality of the church, the communion remains essential. No Christian can exist in a solitary relation with God. In the community of the baptized, all need others and all are necessary for the others. Nobody can say to another member: 'I do not need you' (1 Cor. 12: 21). This is

[322] Rigal, *L'ecclésiologie de communion*, pp. 375-7.
[323] Rigal, *L'ecclésiologie de communion,* pp. 376-7.
[324] Rigal, *L'ecclésiologie de communion,* p. 57.

applicable to the universal church. An isolated community of believers cannot claim to have an ecclesial status, because God's unique church is the communion of churches. This inclusive 'local-universal' relationship proceeds from the unique God who is yet three persons: it implies unity and differences. Therefore, the trinitarian reference must be respected and lived out on the institutional level as well.[325]

Fifthly, whereas Rigal would agree with *Communionis notio* on the importance of the eucharist and episcopate in elaborating a communion ecclesiology, he feels that the document does not adequately address the related issues of episcopal collegiality, the theological and institutional status of episcopal conferences, and the relationship between the conference and the Roman curia. Finally, Rigal mentions some other issues which he considers important but which *Communionis notio* fails to address: the organic communion of diversity and complementarity of charisms and ministries; the fact that ecclesial co-responsibility requires a new style of collaboration between the clergy and laity, as well as the need for further clarification on the specific mission of the various actors.[326]

While agreeing with Rigal on his critique of *Communionis notio*'s approach to the universal-local churches relationship, we are of the opinion that (with regard to the other issues that he says the document should have addressed) he seems to be expecting too much from a document which has a limited objective or scope: to correct some errors in some versions of communion ecclesiology.

(b) Dennis M. Doyle

Dennis M. Doyle, like Rigal, examines the *Communionis notio* against the broader background of the teachings of Vatican II and the recommendations of the 1985 Synod.

[325] Rigal, *L'ecclésiologie de communion,* pp. 375-6.
[326] Rigal, *L'ecclésiologie de communion,* pp. 57, 66-9, 72-3.

However, quite unlike Rigal, Doyle approaches the said document with the keen awareness that it has a limited objective. Consequently inspired by the statement of the fathers of the 1985 Synod that the term *communio* is 'the central and fundamental idea' of Vatican II's documents, and convinced that 'this claim also implies its reverse, that the documents of Vatican II provide the key to a Catholic understanding of communion ecclesiology', Doyle tries to provide a balanced assessment of *Communionis notio*. He does this with the view to outlining a 'framework' for a balanced version of communion ecclesiology.[327]

Therefore, with the teachings of Vatican II as a searchlight, Doyle categorizes the contents of *Communionis notio* on communion ecclesiology into three main areas: 'points highlighted and stressed as correcting current errors';[328] 'points that lay out the basic context';[329] and 'points acknowledged or mentioned or conceded'[330]. Hence, he says that a less selective but more inclusive ecclesiology of communion faithful to Vatican II should take into consideration the above mentioned three areas.

In this respect Doyle, unlike Rigal, seems to embrace rather than criticize the 'points highlighted and stressed as correcting current errors' by *Communionis notio* – though he mentions that these points should be held in equilibrium with those in the second and third areas.[331] His second set of five points outlines what he sees as elements in *Communionis notio* that 'help to lay out the fundamental context of what communion ecclesiology is.' These points are: at the core of the church is a 'personal union of each human being with the divine Trinity'; the inner unity of the church should not 'be considered completely apart from a larger human solidarity'; the church has 'its foundations in Scripture and in the

[327] Doyle, *Communion Ecclesiology*, p. 2.
[328] Doyle, *Communion Ecclesiology*, pp. 128-9.
[329] Doyle, *Communion Ecclesiology*, p. 129.
[330] Doyle, *Communion Ecclesiology*, p. 130.
[331] Doyle, *Communion Ecclesiology*, p. 130.

patristic witness'; the church has both a present pilgrim status and an eschatological fulfilment; and Mary has a central role in the heart of the church.[332]

Furthermore, while Rigal identifies some issues that *Communionis notio* fails to address, Doyle discerns in the document some points it mentions only in passing but that need to be treated further: 'There are yet more points that express elements of communion ecclesiology that are acknowledged or mentioned or alluded to or conceded, but not specially affirmed or stressed or highlighted. I consider these to be "Other Aspects" of communion ecclesiology, ones that in another context could potentially receive fuller treatment'.[333] These points, which are also five in number, make up the third category of Doyle's analysis of *Communionis notio*: the church has both transcendental and changing concrete historical dimensions; in a sense the local churches manifest the universal church, while in another sense they have their own completeness; the unity of the church revolves around both its hierarchical nature and 'the dynamic interplay between the local churches and the church universal'; other ecclesial bodies 'share some degree of communion with the Catholic Church through the unity of the Holy Spirit'; and the eschatological dimension and the social mission of the church should be held in the right balance.[334]

On the basis of his analysis of *Communionis notio* (outlined above) and the works of other communion ecclesiology proponents,[335] and in the light of Vatican II, Doyle presents five 'touchstones' for the vision of the church perceived primarily as communion. He admits that he offers 'not so much a single version of the vision as some touchstones intended to provide guidance for any articulation of communion ecclesiology that would claim the parentage of Vatican II.' By 'touchstones', he means the 'dimensions of the

[332] Doyle, *Communion Ecclesiology*, p. 129.
[333] Doyle, *Communion Ecclesiology*, p. 129.
[334] Doyle, *Communion Ecclesiology*, p. 130.
[335] Among the communion ecclesiologists whose works Doyle reviews, he shows a preference for Henri de Lubac (Doyle, *Communion Ecclesiology*, p. 168).

church that ideally should be present in the various versions of the vision of communion ecclesiology.'[336] Acknowledging his indebtedness to Avery Dulles,[337] he says that the five touchstones are the divine, mystical, sacramental, historical and social dimensions.[338] Doyle explains further:

> Vatican II proclaims a vision of the church (1) as an invitation to share in the *divine* life and love of the three persons in one God; (2) as the *mystical* body of Christ and communion of saints; (3) as *sacramental* communities of Christians who love each other, existing simultaneously as local churches and as embodiments of the church universal; (4) as the pilgrim people of God on its journey through *history*; and (5) as *leaven* in the world. These dimensions of communion, which at times some theologies unfortunately tend to pit against each other …need to be read as complementary.[339]

By allowing the 'searchlight' of Vatican II to reveal both the macro and micro elements of the text of *Communionis notio* on the church as communion, and by categorizing them into five touchstones, it appears Doyle (more than Rigal) prepares the ground for a broader communion-based ecclesiology. On the other hand, while Doyle provides a framework for further theologizing on the church, Rigal seems to succeed better in synthesizing his ecclesiology into an organic whole. Further, though influenced by Dulles, Doyle seems to overlook two other aspects of the ecclesiology of Vatican II which can be found in the former's work: the models of discipleship and herald.

(c) John J. Markey

Writing more than forty years after the commencement of Vatican II and more than a decade after the publication of *Communionis notio*, John J. Markey is the last of the three theologians (we are considering) to have published his monograph on the communion-based ecclesiology of Vatican II. Unlike Rigal and Doyle, Markey does not explicitly examine or

[336] Doyle, *Communion Ecclesiology*, p. 174.
[337] There are some similarities between some of the models of Dulles and the five touchstones of Doyle, *Communion Ecclesiology*, p. 18.
[338] Doyle, *Communion Ecclesiology*, pp. 175-8.
[339] Doyle, *Communion Ecclesiology*, p. 175.

critique *Communionis notio*. Rather, he simply uses *Communionis notio*'s reaffirmation of the 1985 Synod's position on the centrality and fundamentality of communion ecclesiology in the documents of Vatican II to support his own choice of this ecclesiology.[340]

Furthermore, unlike Rigal and Doyle, Markey does well to go beyond the text of *Communionis notio* to seek and outline some reasons why there are different interpretations to the term *communio* as employed by various theologians. In the first place, Markey observes that 'while both the texts and the "spirit" of the council indeed suggest what has come to be known as communion ecclesiology, nowhere did the council actually name and systematically develop this ecclesiology.' He notes secondly that 'even the vocabulary, now so widespread in most theological discussions of the church, cannot be described as consistently employed nor systematically defined.' Thirdly, quite like Dianich and Noceti, he observes that the 'central relationship between the terms "communion" (*communio* in Latin) and "community" (*communitas* in Latin) evoke a number of interpretations; and the terms themselves, while verbally distinct, are often used interchangeably in the documents and in the work of subsequent commentators'. Therefore, he continues, 'while the concept of communion is a rich source of theological reflection, it is also a term that in itself lacks any genuine clarity.'[341]

This lack of clarity, according to Markey, has affected much of post-conciliar communion ecclesiology. Hence, he suggests: 'The next stage in theological reflection must take care not to simply adopt the terminology of communion without fully examining its meaning or the relationships between it and other related concepts.' Consequently he takes up this task as an objective of his study.[342] To do so, Markey employs the thoughts of

[340] Markey, *Creating Communion*, pp. 21-2.
[341] Markey, *Creating Communion*, pp. 22-3.
[342] Markey, *Creating Communion*, p. 23; *cf*. Calabrese, 'Chiesa come "popolo di Dio" o chiesa "comunione"?', pp. 78-88.

the philosopher Josiah Royce (1855-1916). Royce, using the three central ideas of spirit, community and the interpretation of signs, developed a philosophical and religious account of human experience. He used these three ideas 'to present an interpretation of the world that united the individual with the community, the particular with the universal, the human with the divine, while maintaining the genuine autonomy and integrity of each.'[343] Inspired by these three central ideas of Royce, Markey presents the Holy Spirit, community of believers and sacrament as the triad that creates the church as communion.[344]

In view of the need to clarify the distinction between the terms 'communion' and 'community', we focus at this point on the meaning of the latter term as presented by Markey. Once again, he considers Royce as providing a good philosophical understanding of community – in relation to the individual. A community, according to Royce, is a group of humans united in common beliefs and activities, while respecting and appreciating the autonomy and individuality of its members.[345] A genuine human community is characterized by certain conditions; and Markey deciphers six of these conditions in the philosophy of Royce: a community is a complex social process which develops over time; this social process leads to expanded self-interpretation or the acquiring of new memory and hope by its members; thirdly, there is real communication in community; fourthly, there are shared past events; fifthly, there is voluntary cooperation; and underlying such cooperation is love, which creates mutual loyalty.[346]

From the above perspective, Markey says that community is a dimension of the Christian church, because its visible aspect entails a complex social process whose history is deeply rooted in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Secondly, the church

[343] Markey, *Creating Communion*, p. 127.
[344] Markey, *Creating Communion*, pp. 100-68.
[345] Markey, *Creating Communion*, p. 130.
[346] Markey, *Creating Communion*, pp. 131-6.

denotes 'a community that self-consciously lives in memory of Jesus Christ and in the hope of his coming again in the glory of the kingdom of God. This community, begun by the Spirit of the risen Christ, lives, grows, and develops during the historical time between the paschal event and the *parousia*'. Thirdly, he says that the Christian community is characterized by an intricate web of communications in which there is an ongoing process of interpretations for the transmission of its past memory in a way that responds to the present context and signs of the times. Fourthly, through the sacraments of initiation, 'all members of the church share directly in the once-and-for-all saving event of the paschal mystery.' We observe, however, that apparently Markey does not apply the fifth (voluntary cooperation) and sixth (love) conditions to the Christian community.

Having looked at Markey's explanation of 'community', we now consider how he combines the triad together in his ecclesiology of communion:

> Communion is a complex and far-reaching term, because it denotes the triadic (three-way) relationship between the theology of the *Holy Spirit* (called pneumatology), *community* and *sacrament*. I contend that these three concepts were the leading and guiding ideas of the council that can be seen working together throughout the documents to enrich and fulfil many areas of traditional Catholic doctrine. Communion almost always refers to a *community* that is filled with and empowered by the *Spirit* of God and lives through the sharing of gifts and charisms inspired by the Spirit in such a way that it acts as both a *sign and instrument* of God's saving plan for the universal community. In other words, communion means the relationship between the Spirit, a local community and that local community's relationship to all other local communities and their sacramental relationship to the world.[347]

While Markey's attempt to seek the meaning of the term 'communion' and to distinguish it from 'community' is commendable, his failure to consider some earlier significant works on *communio* leads to the omission of some important ingredients in his presentation. In the first place, to look for the meaning of an ancient Christian term without

[347] Markey, *Creating Communion*, p. 24.

biblical exegesis,[348] neglecting the patristic testimony,[349] and using only a modern philosophical hermeneutics smacks of imposing a modern meaning on the term. Secondly, his intention of avoiding varied interpretations in communion ecclesiology by the clarification of the meanings of 'communion' and related terms does not seem to have been realized. This is because if another scholar chooses to rely on a philosopher other than Royce he/she may end up with different meanings of community and communion. Finally, by the manner Markey constructs the model of communion around the triad of the theology of the Holy Spirit, community and sacrament, he apparently does not (unlike Rigal and Doyle) give adequate attention to the christological character of the church.

2.6 Conclusion

Both the concept of reception and the actual process of the reception of the 'mosaic' ecclesiology of Vatican II have developed since the beginning of the council. In contrast to the pre-conciliar concept of reception as a unidirectional process between the *teaching* church and the *receiving* church, Gaillardetz helps us to understand that reception is an ongoing 'spiral-like' reciprocal process between the teaching authority of the church and the church as a whole. This process, many contemporary Catholic theologians affirm, is grounded first of all, not in an ecclesial doctrine or discipline, but in the living word of God.

It is difficult to account for the reception of the 'mosaic' ecclesiology of Vatican II in *theory and practice* across the Catholic world in the past fifty years. This is because the rhythms of reception have not been uniform across the world; and while an ecclesiological model may be highly received in theory, its reception in practice may be lagging behind,

[348] Bori and Franco (*cf.* subsection 2.5.1b) are among those have done some exegetical works of the concept of *koinōnia*.
[349] Preceded by Congar and some other pre-conciliar communion ecclesiologists, Kasper, Dianich, Ratzinger and others have considered the use of the *koinōnia* by the church fathers.

and vice versa. Using Routhier's periodization of four phases, we have succeeded in presenting only a broad picture of what has transpired in the past fifty years.

The reception in *theory* could be summarized as follows: it appears that, with the exception of the first phase, in each succeeding phase a model of the church or two were emphasized without necessarily neglecting the other models. In other words, in the first phase, a *broad spectrum* of the 'mosaic art' of the church was revealed in *daylight*; whereas it was as if in each of the second to fourth phases, a *spotlight* was focused on only an ecclesial *icon* or two while the other icons in the spectrum of the 'mosaic art' appeared dimly in the background. More specifically, in the second phase, only the icon of *people of God* came under the focus of the spotlight, while the other icons remained in the background; in the third phase, the two icons of *people of God* and *sacrament* were highlighted, leaving the others in the background; and in the current phase, the spotlight is on the icon of *communion*, with the rest in the background. Moreover, with the hindsight of what has been revealed in the previous phases, the spotlight reveals 'communion', not merely as one more icon, but as the most pronounced icon in the whole spectrum of the 'mosaic art' of the church. For this reason, we spent a good portion of this chapter considering the development (in the past fifty years) of the understanding of our privileged model. Its reception in *practice* is, however, lagging behind.[350]

Hamer, Congar, Paul VI, Bori, Franco, John Paul II, Dianich, Noceti, Kasper, Tillard and Ratzinger (among others) have all contributed to our understanding of the church as communion. While one could see the 1985 Synod as a *watershed* in the understanding of the conciliar ecclesiology of communion, the publication of *Communionis notio* (1992) could be considered as a *canal* constructed by the CDF to control and direct

[350] Calabrese says that there is still a lot more to be done for a comprehensive reception of the communion model in Catholic theology and praxis (Calabrese, 'Chiesa come "popolo di Dio" o chiesa "comunione"?', pp. 96-104); *cf*. A. Shorter, 'Evangelization and Culture', *AFER* 37 (1995), p. 103.

what it thinks is the main stream of communion ecclesiology, while drawing our attention to some of its digressions. In their consideration of *Communionis notio*, whereas Rigal appears to focus on critiquing the rigidity of the 'preventive walls' (i.e. measures against the errors) of the canal of *communion*, Doyle broadens our outlook to include the water (i.e. 'other aspects') flowing through the canal, and Markey points to the need to examine the very source of the water: the meaning of 'communion' and its distinction from 'community'.

In this respect, we think that Dianich and Noceti provide us with sufficient distinction between the above two terms. And their works together with those of the other scholars considered draw our attention to the multi-dimensional nature of the church as communion, in which the communion with the triune God (who is himself a unique communion of three Persons) is the most fundamental aspect. With the above points in mind, we wish to contribute towards the *ongoing*[351] reception of the 'mosaic' ecclesiology of Vatican II, by adopting the multi-models approach of Dulles to account for its multi-faceted nature (chapter three), and by harmonizing the other models with the primary, multi-dimensional and integrative model of *communion* to construct a systematic communion-based ecclesiology (chapter four). Finally, our presentation in the two subsequent chapters shows an awareness of the fact that the communion model, like any other model, has some weaknesses.

[351] Kasper says the reception of Vatican II is far from being achieved (Kasper, *Chiesa Cattolica*, p. 31). Also writing recently, Theobald (after a lengthy treatise on the reception of Vatican II) states that the process of reception as at 2008 was at the same threshold as at the conclusion of Vatican II (1965) [Theobald, *La ricezione del Vaticano II*, p. 510; *cf*. Melloni et al, 'Introduzione', p. 9].

PART TWO: AVERY DULLES' MODELS OF THE CHURCH: A THEOLOGICAL TOOL FOR THE SYSTEMATIZATION OF THE MULTI-FACETED ECCLESIOLOGY OF VATICAN II

In this second part, there is an attempt to systematize the 'mosaic' ecclesiology of Vatican II by employing the multi-models' approach of Avery Dulles. To begin with, chapter three presents Dulles' six models of institution, mystical communion, sacrament, herald, servant and community of disciples. Then, some indications are given as to the adoption of Dulles' approach in a 'renewal in continuity' fashion. Subsequently, the fourth chapter takes up the task of constructing a systematic communion-based ecclesiology by a process of harmonization. In the process, there is an attempt to show how, on the one hand, the communion model compensates for some of the weaknesses of the other models; and, on the other hand, how each other model augments the shortfalls in the communion model.

CHAPTER THREE: DULLES' MODELS OF THE CHURCH: RENEWAL IN CONTINUITY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter aims at elaborating on the six models of Dulles which have been adopted to elucidate the 'mosaic' ecclesiology of Vatican II. These models are not aspects of the church, for they are not constitutive elements of the church. They are rather a theological 'tool' for the description of the church.[352] The presentation on each of the initial five models (institution, mystical communion, sacrament, herald and servant) includes what Dulles perceives as the goal (purpose) of the church, its bonds of membership, and its beneficiaries. In addition, there is a presentation on what Dulles sees as each model's perspective of ministry, ecumenism and the church-kingdom of God relationship. Then, after mentioning some of the proponents of a model, as well as its strengths and weaknesses, an indication on how a model highlights an aspect of the 'mosaic' ecclesiology of Vatican II is given. Moreover, for the sixth model (community of disciples), besides its description, and its strengths and weaknesses, there is a consideration of how Dulles, taking it as a basis for a systematic ecclesiology, attempts to use it to harmonize the previous five models.

Though Dulles intends to present '*irreducible distinct* models',[353] his sixth model appears to be a hybrid between the model of 'discipleship' and an aspect of the 'communion' model.[354] Therefore, in the first place, this thesis argues that the *distinct* sixth

[352] A. Dulles, *Models of the Church*, 2nd ed. (New York: Doubleday, 1987), pp, 22-5; subsequently we shall use this *second* edition unless otherwise specified; *cf*. B. Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 2007), pp. 284-5.
[353] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 28.
[354] *cf*. B. Gleeson, 'Images, Understandings, and Models of the Church in History: An Update', p.1, http://aejt.com.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/107526/Gleeson_Church_in_history.pdf (accessed on 24 June 2012).

model is 'discipleship' (dissociating the element of 'community' from it). Secondly, this thesis holds that for the 'mosaic' ecclesiology of Vatican II, the 'communion' model (of which 'community' is only an aspect) is the primary model.

3.2 The Church as Institution

We saw in chapter one that Vatican II perceives the church as being both invisible and visible (*cf*. section 1.1).[355] It is the visible aspect of the church, which has to do with her creed, doctrine, sacraments, other liturgical celebrations, juridico-hierarchical order and the like that Dulles refers to as the institutional model.[356] He says that in the institutional model, the church is essentially a society – a 'perfect society' in the sense that it is subordinate to no other society and lacks nothing required for its own institutional completeness. Here the structure of government is highlighted as the formal element in the church. To unite men and women of many nations into a well-knit community of conviction, commitment, and hope, as well as to minister effectively to their needs, responsible officers and properly approved procedures are required.[357]

Characteristic of the institutional model, he writes, is the hierarchical conception of authority: in the church the fullness of power is concentrated in the hands of a ruling class. The powers and functions of the church are generally divided into three:

> teaching, sanctifying, and governing. This division of powers leads to further distinctions between the church teaching and the church taught, the church sanctifying and the church sanctified, the church governing and the church governed. In each case the church as institution is on the giving end. So these authors say: The church teaches, sanctifies, and commands, in each case identifying the church with the governing body or hierarchy.[358]

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[355] Dulles begins his presentation with the institutional model not because he sees it as the primary conciliar model, but because he wants to demonstrate the chronological shift in paradigm from this model to that of 'communion'.

[356] Medard Kehl makes an insightful distinction between 'primary institutions' and 'secondary institutions' [Kehl, *La chiesa: Trattato sistematico di ecclesiologia cattolica* (Cinisello Balsamo: San Paolo, 1995), p. 376, footnote no. 4]. His articulation has been incorporated in subsection 4.4.1.

[357] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, pp. 34-5.

[358] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 37.

For this model, the bonds of membership are the profession of the approved doctrines, reception of the legitimate sacraments, and submission to the duly appointed pastors. Thus, the test of membership is visible; and the members of the church are the beneficiaries. The purpose of the church is eternal life for its own members. It is held that outside the church no one can be saved.[359] This model, taken in isolation, is the least favourable for ecumenism, according to Dulles; for, it is held that the one church of Christ *is* the Roman Catholic Church, and therefore unity means returning to it.[360]

As regards the relationship between the church and the kingdom of God, Dulles explains that the institutional ecclesiology views the church as a kind of 'sacred chariot' that takes men and women to their destination provided they stay aboard and avoid serious misconduct. Since the church, in this model, appears simply as a means of grace, there is no real place for the church in the final consummation.[361]

In the four centuries preceding Vatican II, the insistence on the visible aspect of the church became a standard characteristic of Roman Catholic ecclesiology because, 'theologians and canonists, responding to attacks on the papacy and hierarchy, accented precisely those features that the adversaries were denying.'[362] Dulles mentions Robert Bellarmine (1542-1621) as a key proponent of the institutional model.[363]

Dulles, however, distinguishes between institutionalism and 'the acceptance of the institutional element in the church.' Institutionalism arises when 'the institutional element is treated as primary', in which case there is a distortion in the understanding of the church. Dulles then clarifies this issue in relation to Vatican II:

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[359] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, pp .16, 40-1.
[360] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, pp. 140-4.
[361] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, pp.109-10.
[362] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 36.
[363] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, pp. 16, 34.

> Vatican II, which for Roman Catholics must count as the most authoritative presentation of ecclesiology in the present century, cannot be fairly accused of institutionalism, though some traces of institutionalism may no doubt be found here and there in the conciliar documents. The primary notions of the church, in the *Dogmatic Constitution*, *Lumen gentium*, are those of mystery, sacrament, body of Christ, and people of God. Only after two chapters devoted to these general themes does the *Constitution,* in third chapter, proceed to discuss the formal structures of ecclesiastical government.[364]

Let us now sum up what Dulles sees as the strengths and weaknesses of the model. The main strengths are: this model has a strong endorsement in the official church documents of the past few centuries; it provides links between an uncertain present and an esteemed religious past, by insisting strongly on the elements of continuity with the Christian origins; and it gives Catholics a strong sense of corporate identity and clear goals for missionary action.[365] On the other hand, he points out the following weaknesses: it has comparatively meagre basis in Scripture and the early tradition of the church; it leads to the unfortunate consequences of clericalism, passivity on the part of the laity, and juridicism; it raises obstacles to creative and fruitful theology; it hinders ecumenism; and it is out of phase with the demands of the times.[366]

The above notwithstanding, a pure institutional model, Dulles observes, has rarely been advocated: 'Even the schema of Vatican I and the encyclicals of Leo XIII and Pius XII, for all their insistence on the church as a "perfect society," never identified the society exclusively with its institutional elements.' These documents 'tempered the institutional with more spiritual and organic conceptions, such as those of the communion of grace or the body of Christ.'[367]

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[364] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 35; *cf.* Dulles, *A Church to Believe in: Discipleship and the Dynamics of Freedom* (New York: Crossroad, 1982) p. 4; *cf.* Y. Congar, 'Implicazioni cristotogiche e pneumatologiche dell'ecclesiologia del Vaticano II' in G. Alberigo (ed.), *L'ecclesiologia del Vatican II: dinamismi e prospettive* (Bologna: Dehoniane, 1981), pp. 98, 108.
[365] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, pp. 41-3.
[366] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, pp. 43-5.
[367] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, pp. 45-6. Similarly, Richard Rymarz assesses Robert Bellarmine as follows: 'Bellarmine, even within his rigid definition also recognized at least two ways of describing the church. He first identified the church as a body with the visible bonds that expressed Christian beliefs, reception of

In short, then, in a systematic articulation of the ecclesiology of Vatican II, the 'church as institution' should be employed, though as one of the secondary models.

3.3 The Church as Mystical Communion

Several ecclesiological images and metaphors (e.g. shepherd-flock, vine-branches, people of God, body and bride of Christ, temple of the Holy Spirit) of Vatican II connote common-union. They stress the communion of members of the church with God and with one another in Christ and through the Holy Spirit. Dulles says that it is the 'church as mystical communion'[368] which harmonizes all of these images and metaphors. He elaborates more on the metaphors of body of Christ and people of God because of their prominence in *Lumen gentium*.[369] The notion of the church as body of Christ can be found in the Pauline/deutero-Pauline letters: 'In Rom. 12 and 1 Cor. 12 the main point is the mutual concern, mutual dependence of the members of the local community upon one another.' On the other hand, in Ephesians and Colossians, 'the accent is on the headship of Christ and on the subordination of the total church to him.'[370]

After mentioning that the second metaphor, the people of God, has deep roots in the Old Testament, Dulles focuses on its usage in New Testament. He says that in the New Testament, the Christian *ekklēsia* is seen as the people of God of the New Covenant or the

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sacraments and filial loyalty to the pope. [Secondly] the soul of the church was more spiritual, manifested by living out the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity [Rymarz, 'The New Evangelization in an Ecclesiological Context', *The Heythrop Journal*, 52 (2011), p.772].

[368] Though Dulles uses the terms 'communion' and '*mystical* communion' as synonyms to convey the understanding of the church as 'communion with God and among the faithful', he seems to prefer the latter term which explicitly expresses the mystical or transcendental nature of the 'communion'. However, Vatican II, Severino Dianich, Carmelo Torcivia, Serena Noceti, and many others use the simple term 'communion', while calling our attention to the priority of its mystical or transcendent aspect over its human 'community' aspect [Dianich & Torcivia, *Forme del popolo di Dio tra comunità e fraternità* (Cinisello Balsamo: San Paolo, 2012), pp. 11-3; *cf*. Dianich & Noceti, *Trattato sulla chiesa* (Brescia: Queriniana, 2005), pp. 148-52; *cf.* subsections 2.5.2 to 2.5.5 of this study].

[369] *cf*. Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith *Communionis notio*, *Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on Some Aspects of the Church Understood as Communion,* no. 1.

[370] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 50; *cf*. G. Routhier, *Il concilio Vaticano II: Ricezione ed ermeneutica* (Milan: Vita & Pensiero, 2007), pp. 110-1; *cf*. C. Theobald, *La ricezione del Vaticano II: 1. Tornare alla sorgente* (Bologna: Dehoniane, 2011), p. 474.

New Israel (Rom. 9:23-26, Heb. 8:10, 1 Pet. 2:9). Dulles, in line with Vatican II, sees the metaphors of the body of Christ and the people of God as being similar; they both stress the immediate relationship of all believers to the Holy Spirit, who directs the whole church.[371]

Despite the similarities, Dulles points out that the metaphor of people of God differs from that of the body of Christ in that it allows for a greater distance between the church and its divine head. On the other hand, he claims that the metaphor 'of the body of Christ is superior to that of people of God.' This is because the former, rather than the latter, brings out clearly 'what is new in the New Covenant, namely that men [and women] are brought into consciously affirmed filial relationship to God' in Christ Jesus. Furthermore, the former metaphor avoids the 'egotistical and monopolistic' tones of the latter. This notwithstanding, Dulles observes that the metaphor of the body of Christ has its own defects. Firstly, it does not make clear whether the body is 'a pure communion of grace,' or 'essentially visible'. Secondly, there is the tendency of an 'unhealthy divinization'. Thus, Dulles concludes that the two images complement each other,[372] and consequently, he states that in the communion model, the church is viewed as the people of God or the body of Christ, growing into the final perfection of the kingdom of God.[373] 'The mystical communion of men [and women] with one another is something that begins on earth and is consummated in heaven. This implies that the church, which exists inchoately in this life, reaches its fullness in the life beyond.'[374]

As with the institutional model, Dulles considers the bonds, beneficiaries and the goal of the church as mystical communion. The bonds of the church are primarily the interior graces and gifts of the Holy Spirit; the external bonds are given secondary

[371] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, pp. 53-4.
[372] *cf*. Rymarz, 'The New Evangelization', pp.774-5.
[373] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, pp. 53-5.
[374] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 110.

importance. As in the first model, the members of the church are the beneficiaries. However, here membership is understood in a more spiritual sense; the members are those animated by supernatural faith and charity. Hence, some people outside the visible church could be beneficiaries.[375] Consequently this model does not see visible unity as essential.[376] The church is already one in the deepest sense thanks to the oneness of God our Father, Christ our Saviour, and the Spirit who is their mutual communion with each other and with us; and all Christians need to come to the consciousness of such a unity.[377] Thus, the goal of the church is here seen as communion with God, and wherever the church is present men and women are already united with God.[378] In this model, then, ministry is aimed at fostering believers' union with the triune God as well as fellowship among themselves.[379]

Dulles rightly observes that many church fathers, especially, St. Augustine, developed the Pauline notion of the body of Christ. They stressed on the mystical and invisible communion that binds together all those who are enlivened by the grace of Christ. In the High Middle Ages, St. Thomas Aquinas and others also spoke of the church as the body of Christ.[380] Subsequently, while institutionalism dominated in Roman Catholic ecclesiology, some Protestant theologians presented the church as community of Christians, making use of the Pauline notion of the body of Christ. These theologians were influenced by Ferdinand Tönnies' sociological classifications of *Gesellschaft* (society) and *Gemeinschaft* (community), as well as the further development of the latter concept by

[375] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, pp. 57-8.
[376] This notwithstanding, it is the communion model which has gained prominence in ecumenical dialogues in the past few decades [*cf*. W. Kasper, *Harvesting the Fruits: Basic Aspects of Christian Faith in Ecumenical Dialogue* (London: Continuum, 2009), pp. 51-2, 72-8].
[377] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, pp. 147-8.
[378] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 58.
[379] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 164.
[380] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, pp. 50-1; *cf*. his spring 1993 lecture on 'The Church as Communion' in Dulles*, Church and Society: Laurence J. McGinley Lectures, 1988-2007* (New York: Fordham, 2008), pp. 131-2.

Charles H. Cooley.[381] Dulles notes that some Protestant theologians, such as Rudolph Sohm and Emil Brunner, developed the community concept of the church in an 'anti-institutional sense.' However, he says, Dietrich Bonhoeffer developed the concept of the church as an interpersonal community, without the anti-institutional implications.[382]

The groundwork for the revival in Roman Catholic theology of the church as a communion, says Dulles, was laid by Johann A. Möhler and his Tübingen associates in the nineteenth century: 'they popularized the notion of the church as a supernatural organism vivified by the Holy Spirit, a fellowship sustained by the outpouring of divine grace.'[383] Another Catholic, Arnold Rademacher studied further the church as communion using Tönnies' categories. Rademacher, according to Dulles, maintained that the church is in its inner core community (*Gemeinschaft*); in its outer core, however, it is society (*Gesellschaft*). The latter, which is phenomenal, is the outward manifestation of the former, which is the 'real'. In the *Mystici corporis* (1943), Pius XII defined the church as the mystical body of Christ and identified it with the Roman Catholic Church.[384] In line with what we saw in chapter two (subsection 2.5.1a), Dulles mentions Yves Congar and Jerome Hamer as key Catholic proponents of the communion model in the modern era.[385]

Vatican II in *Lumen gentium,* as Dulles explains, develops the idea of the church as the body of Christ, slightly retrenching from two positions taken by *Mystici corporis*:

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[381] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 47. It is significant to note here that Piet Fransen argues, after a careful study of the work of Tönnies, that the latter's book, *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft* (1887), has been misinterpreted. Among other things, Fransen says: in both the 'society' and 'community' of Tönnies the institution is not only present but necessary though in different natures: '*Nei due casi l'istituzione è non soltanto presente, ma necessaria, anche se per sua natura diversa*' [Fransen, 'La comunione ecclesiale principio di vita' in Alberigo (ed.), *L'ecclesiologia del Vatican II*, p. 170].
[382] Dulles, *Models of the Church,* pp. 47-8.
[383] Dulles, *Models of the Church,* p. 50.
[384] *cf.* Pius XII, Encyclical Letter, *Mystici corporis*, 29 June 1943, AAS 35 (1943), pp.193-248; *cf.* Dulles, *Models of the Church*, pp. 48-9, 52.
[385] *cf.* Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 49; *cf.* Raymarz, 'The New Evangelization', p. 774.

> It distinguishes between the church as hierarchical society and as body of Christ, and asserts that the two are related to each other in a way comparable to the human and divine natures of Christ. The structure of the church is described as an instrument serving Christ's Spirit, who vivifies it building up his body. Secondly, *Lumen gentium* does *not* assert that the church of Christ or the mystical body *is* coterminous with the Roman Catholic Church.[386]

Despite his high regard for the metaphor of the body of Christ, Dulles observes that the principal metaphor of the church in the documents of Vatican II is that of the people of God.[387] He further notes that the relationship between the church and the Holy Spirit, prominent in the complementary metaphors of the people of God and the body of Christ, has been extensively explored by Heribert Mühlen.[388]

For the advantages of the mystical communion model, Dulles mentions its strong biblical basis, its excellent foundation in Catholic tradition, its ecumenical fruitfulness, its great appeal in our day as it meets the human need of belongingness, and the fact that it helps to revive spirituality and the life of prayer.[389] He then gives the following as the weaknesses of the model: it does not clarify well the relationship between the spiritual and visible dimensions of the church; it tends to raise and divinize the church beyond its due, as in the case of the church as body of Christ; it fails to give a very clear sense of identity or mission to Christians; and the term *koinōnia* (communion) is used ambiguously to cover both the church as a network of close interpersonal relationships and the church as a mystical communion of grace.[390]

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[386] Dulles, *Models of the Church,* pp. 52-3. Here, Dulles refers to LG 8. Dulles comments further on the significance of Vatican II's substitution of the term 'subsists in' (*subsistit in*) for the term 'is' (*est*) in the initial drafts of the *Constitution on the Church* (*Models of the Church,* pp. 126-7, 139); *cf.* Dulles*, The Dimensions of the Church: A Post-conciliar Reflection* (New York: Newman, 1967), pp. 9-11, 30-1. Since the conclusion of the council, however, there have been various interpretations of *subsistit in* (*cf*. subsection 4.4.6).
[387] *cf*. Dulles' fall 2005 Laurence J. McGinley Lecture entitled, 'Benedict XVI: Interpreter of Vatican II' in Dulles, *Church and Society*, p. 475; *cf*. Routhier, *Il concilio Vaticano II*, p. 107.
[388] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, pp. 53-6.
[389] Dulles, *Models of the Church,* pp. 58-9.
[390] Dulles, *Models of the Church,* pp. 59-60; *cf*. Dianich et al, *Forme del popolo di Dio*, p. 11; *cf*. Dianich et al, *Trattato sulla chiesa,* pp. 150-2.

In short, then, Dulles holds that for the systematization of the ecclesiology of Vatican II, the 'church as mystical communion' should be considered as a distinctive and an indispensable model which encompasses several images and metaphors. Secondly, the institutional model is secondary to the 'mystical communion' model. The latter model, which we prefer to call simply as 'communion', is the primary model of Vatican II (*cf.* subsections 1.5.4, 2.5.1-2.5.6).

3.4 The Church as Sacrament

Another model of the 'mosaic' ecclesiology of Vatican II is the 'church as sacrament'. The church as sacrament, according to Dulles, is based on the understanding that Jesus Christ is simultaneously the sacrament of God's self-gift and of human's fully obedient acceptance. The mutual acceptance of God and human, initially signified by the history of Israel, reaches its consummation in Christ's cross and resurrection.[391] He continues:

> Christ, as the sacrament of God, contains the grace that he signifies. Conversely, he signifies and confers the grace he contains. In him the invisible grace of God takes on visible form. But the sacrament of redemption is not complete in Jesus as a single individual. In order to become the kind of sign he must be, he must appear as the sign of God's redemptive love extended toward all mankind, and of the response of all mankind to that redemptive love. [392]

In this light then, says Dulles, the church is in the first instance a sign. It must signify in a historically tangible form the redeeming grace of Christ. Moreover, the church is not just a sign, but a sacrament. She is the efficacious visible manifestation of the grace of Christ in

[391] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 67.
[392] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, pp. 67-8.

the human community. The visible (institutional) and the invisible (inner) aspects of the church are, therefore, adequately comprehended in the sacramental model.[393]

In this model the bonds of union, according to Dulles, are all the social, visible signs of grace of Christ operative in the believing Christians. Grace comes to expression in them when they manifest their faith, hope, and charity by witness, worship and service. Here, the beneficiaries of the church are all those who are better able to articulate and live their faith thanks to their contact with the believing and loving church. The sign value of the church will appear in many different ways to persons differently situated with reference to the community. Thus, there is no sharp line of demarcation between the hesitant member and the sympathetic inquirer.[394]

The goal of the church is to purify and intensify the human response to the grace of Christ. Since this model brings with it the concept of the priest as a 'sacred mediator' and therefore as a focal centre for the community, the priest must visibly be a sign and sacrament of Christ. As in the case of the institutional model, the sacramental model sees ecumenism as a restoration of the visible communion among all Christian denominations; for they all need each other to become more fully the sacrament of Jesus Christ to the world.[395] And with regard to the church-kingdom of God relationship, it is said that the church betokens the actual presence, in a hidden way, of the kingdom that it points to. What is essential to the kingdom, the reconciling grace of Christ, is truly at work in the church, though not exclusively in the church.[396]

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[393] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 68; *cf*. Dulles, *The Craft of Theology*, p. 35. Furthermore, there is a serious difficulty in presenting the 'church as sacrament' as an efficacious sign (*cf*. subsection 4.5.2).
[394] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, pp. 72-3.
[395] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, pp. 151,167,169.
[396] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, pp. 73, 114-5. Following thoughts similar to those of Dulles, and holding, in the first place, that 'to affirm that Christ has come is to affirm that God's reign has broken through in human history,' and secondly 'that the effects of God's saving work may be summed up under the biblical category of the *basileia theou*, that is, the kingdom, or reign, or royal dominion, of God', Simon Hewitt-Horsman suggests

Dulles mentions Cyprian, Augustine, Thomas Aquinas and Matthias J. Scheeben as having anticipated many twentieth-century Catholic theologians in the use of the model of the church as sacrament. In the modern era, according to Dulles, Henri de Lubac has made a major contribution to the understanding of the church as sacrament. de Lubac argues that the divine and human in the church can never be dissociated. He explains: 'If Christ is the sacrament of God, the church is for us the sacrament of Christ; she represents him, in the full and ancient meaning of the term, she really makes him present.' To de Lubac, the church is the very continuation of Christ, 'in a sense far more real than that in which it can be said that any human institution is its founder's continuation.'[397] These ideas, according to Dulles, were developed further by Karl Rahner, Otto Semmerlroth, Edward Schillebeeckx, and Yves Congar, among others.[398] These developments will culminate in Vatican II explicitly perceiving the church as a sacrament (LG 1). However, as Dulles observes, the council does not give a theological explanation of the relationships among Christ, the church and the seven ritual sacraments,[399] though from the *Constitution on the Liturgy*, *Sacrosanctum concilium,* one understands that it is in the eucharistic celebration that the church as a sacrament becomes most evident.[400]

Dulles then identifies the following strengths of the sacramental model: it is very useful in relating the institutional model of the church with that of mystical communion; it gives ample scope to the working of the divine beyond the limits of the institutional church, without neglecting the importance of the latter; it is able to integrate ecclesiology with

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that the 'church may, in turn, be described as the sacrament of the kingdom' [Hewitt-Horsman, 'Church as Sacrament: A Model for Political Ecclesiology', *New Blackfriars*, 85 (2004), p. 361].

[397] H. de Lubac, *Catholicism* (London: Burns & Oates, 1950), p. 29.

[398] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 64; *cf*. Hewitt-Horsman, 'Church as Sacrament', pp. 358-9.

[399] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, pp. 65-6; *cf*. Dianich et al, *Trattato sulla chiesa*, p. 153.

[400] *Sacrosanctum concilium*, no. 41; *cf.* Dulles, *Models of the Church*, pp. 68-70; see also his fall 2004 Laurence J. McGinley Lecture entitled, 'A Eucharistic Church: The Vision of John Paul II' in Dulles, *Church and Society*, pp. 443-4.

christology, sacramentology and other theological themes; and it motivates strong loyalty to the church, while at the same time making room for honest criticism.[401]

On the other hand, as regards the demerits of this model, Dulles mentions the following: that, it has found very little response in Protestant thought; and that, when carried to the extreme, it can lead to 'narcissistic aestheticism' not reconcilable with a full Christian commitment to social and ethical values. Additionally, he says, others may raise the following objections, which he thinks are untenable: that, it has comparatively little basis in the bible and early Christian tradition; and that, it is not easily available for preaching.[402]

In line with a trend in Catholic ecclesiology in the 1970s,[403] Dulles saw the sacramental model as having 'exceptional capacities for incorporating what is sound in each of the other four models.' So he attempted to use it as the basis for articulating a post-conciliar systematic ecclesiology.[404] Now however, he uses the 'church as community of disciples' as the primary model.[405]

3.5 The Church as Herald

A key facet of the missionary aspect of the 'mosaic' ecclesiology of Vatican II is the proclamation of the gospel. This is what Dulles refers to as the 'church as herald'. The herald model of the church, according to him, differs from the sacramental model in that it

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[401] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, pp. 73-4. Hewitt-Horsman, in conceiving the church not only as sacrament of Christ *but also of the kingdom of God*, notices some additional advantages of this model. Firstly, he says, 'describing the church as sacrament of the kingdom brings the eschatological orientation of ecclesial existence into sharp relief The church is provisional and does not exist for its own sake, but rather for the sake of a reality larger than itself.' Secondly, according to Hewitt-Horsman, the church, reminded of her provisionality, 'is reminded likewise of the call to humility. The notion of the' church as sacrament of the 'kingdom should serve as a check on the anti-evangelical triumphalism that has been so damaging in the past' (Hewitt-Horsman, 'Church as Sacrament', p. 363).

[402] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, pp. 74-5.

[403] Dianich et al, *Trattato sulla chiesa*, p. 153.

[404] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 206; *cf.* Dulles, *The Resilient Church: The Necessity and Limits of Adaptation* (New York: Doubleday, 1977), p. 26.

[405] Kasper also initially used the sacramental model as the key to his ecclesiology, but now he prefers to use the 'communion' model (Kasper, *Chiesa di Gesù Cristo*, pp. 21-5).

makes the 'word' of God primary and the 'sacrament' secondary. And though it has many points of contact with the communitarian understanding of the church as people of God, it differs in the sense that it emphasizes faith and proclamation over the interpersonal relations and mystical communion. This model is 'kerygmatic, for it looks upon the church as a herald – one who receives an official message with the commission to pass it on.' Contrasted with the three previous models, the herald model makes a sharp distinction 'between the church in its terrestrial form and the kingdom, considered as an eschatological reality.' [406]

In this model, as Dulles explains, the primary bond of communion is faith. Faith here means the response to the gospel – the proclamation of the Christ event. Therefore, the form of church order is characteristically congregational; the church is regarded as complete in each single local congregation. Hence, the church is not dependent for its existence on any worldwide structure. Indeed, the church exists wherever there is a community gathered in the name of Christ (*cf*. Mt. 18:20). There can be real unity among all congregations in so far as all of them confess Christ and have faith in him. Thus, it is held that union could be achieved by the 'continual conversion' of each congregation to Christ, who is the source of the only kind of unity worth seeking.[407]

The herald model sees, according to Dulles, the beneficiaries of the church to be those who hear the word of God and put their faith in Christ as Lord and Saviour. And the church's goal is simply to herald the message to all nations in accordance with the great commission of Matt. 28:18-20. Only God can produce conversion and build up his kingdom; so that is not necessarily the church's responsibility.[408] Here, then, the dominant form of ministry is the proclamation of the word of God. The ordained minister is seen

[406] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, pp. 76, 79; *cf*. UR 4, 7.
[407] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, pp. 83,153.
[408] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, pp. 83-4.

especially as a preacher, and any sacramental functions he has are understood 'as a kind of prolongation of the ministry of the word.'[409]

The model of the 'church as herald', Dulles observes, has been prominent in Protestant theology. He refers to Karl Barth as the chief proponent of this ecclesiology in the twentieth century, observing that the latter was influenced by St. Paul and Martin Luther. Barth warns against the tendency of the church to 'domesticate' the bible to the extent of ceasing to be ruled by the word of God.[410] Barth believes that the church is actually constituted by the word being proclaimed and faithfully heard. The church is the congregation that is gathered by the word – a word that ceaselessly summons it to repentance and reform.[411] Distinguishing between a theology of glory and a theology of the cross, Barth holds that the church's correct attitude is to point away from itself like John the Baptist pointing to the Lamb of God.[412] In Barth's view, then, 'the church is not the object of faith, we do not believe *in* the church; but we do believe that in this congregation the work of the Holy Spirit becomes an event.'[413]

Barth's ecclesiology of the herald, according to Dulles, is closely paralleled in Roman Catholic theology by Hans Küng. Küng, who did his doctoral dissertation on Barth, holds that the biblical term *ekklēsia* 'means both the actual process of congregating and the congregated community itself'. And this, he says, is effected by the summoning of a herald.[414] For him, therefore, the local church is the church itself as fully present in each

[409] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 169.
[410] K. Barth, *Church Dogmatics* 1/1 (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1936), pp. 298-9; *cf.* Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 77. With such a strong emphasis on the authority of Scriptures over the magisterium, Dulles indicates that in 'some Protestant traditions the magisterium is seen as subject to correction by private scholarship' (Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 87).
[411] Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, pp. 299-300; *cf.* Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 77.
[412] Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, pp. 126, 190, 204, 301; *cf.* Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 77.
[413] Barth, *Dogmatics in Outline* (New York: Harper Touchbooks, 1959), p. 143. Dulles examines also the existential variant of the kerygmatic theology presented by Rudolf Bultmann and the post-Bultmannians (Dulles, *Models of the Church*, pp. 79-82).
[414] H. Küng, *The Church* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1968), p. 84; *cf*. Dulles, *Models of the Church*, pp. 78-9.

assembly that responds to God's word. He emphasizes that the church is neither the kingdom of God, nor does it build the kingdom, nor extend it on earth, nor work for its realization. The church is devoted entirely to the service of the kingdom; for it is God alone who can bring about his reign.[415]

Vatican II, according to Dulles, 'attempted to capitalize on various themes derived from the Barthian theology of the word, but it was not satisfied with a merely prophetic understanding of the word.' He says that, for instance, the *Constitution on the Liturgy* states that Christ is present not only in the Scriptures, but also in the ecclesial community gathered in prayer, and in the sacraments, especially in the eucharist (SC 7).[416] Secondly, Dulles observes that while Vatican II's *Constitution on Divine Revelation* 'begins on a markedly kerygmatic note … it immediately goes on to quote the first letter of John [1: 1-3]' (DV 1). This means that for Vatican II, 'the word mediates not only what is heard but what appeared and was seen, and the goal of preaching is not mere profession of faith in the message, but rather a communion of life and love.'[417]

Dulles sees the following as the strengths of the herald model: it has a good biblical foundation; it gives a clear sense of identity and mission to the church, especially the local church; it is conducive to a spirituality that focuses on God's sovereignty and the infinite distance of humans from God – hence, their need of repentance and reform; and it gives rise to a very rich theology of the word. Dulles holds that all the above merits, 'well developed in the Protestant theology of the word, are valuable correctives to the Catholic tendency to focus on complacency, on celebration, on sacramentality.'[418]

[415] Küng, *The Church*, p. 92; *cf*. Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 79.
[416] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 86.
[417] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, pp. 86-7.
[418] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, pp. 84-5.

The herald model, however, is not devoid of weaknesses. For its demerits, Dulles highlights the following: it overlooks the incarnational aspect of the Christian revelation. Christianity stands or falls with the affirmation that the Word has been made flesh. Secondly, it neglects the institutional aspect of the church; the church seems to dissolve into a series of totally disconnected happenings. Thirdly, it is open to the dangers of 'private' interpretations of the bible. And finally, it focuses too exclusively on verbal witness to the neglect of action, being pessimistic regarding the possibilities of human effort to establish a better world.[419]

By identifying the proclamation of the word of God (herald) as a distinctive model of Vatican II, Dulles (more than many post-conciliar Roman Catholic ecclesiologists) brings into sharp focus the importance of the *kerygmatic* mission in the systematic articulation of the 'mosaic' ecclesiology of Vatican II.

3.6 The Church as Servant

We agree with John D. Dadosky 'that one of the permanent achievements of the [Second Vatican] Council lies in its recognition of mutual relations with the *other* in such documents as *Gaudium et spes* and *Nostra aetate* for example.'[420] The specific 'other' which the church dialogues with and which is the major concern of *Gaudium et spes* is the 'world'; and it is this 'church-world dialogue' that Dulles considers as the servant model of the 'mosaic' ecclesiology of Vatican II. In this model, according Dulles, the church is seen principally in terms of its service to the larger human community. This service involves the transformation of the world into a place of peace, justice, freedom and brotherhood.[421] The

[419] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, pp. 85-8.
[420] J.D. Dadosky, 'The Multiple Dimensions of the Church towards an Explanatory Account', *New Blackfriars*, 90 (2009), p. 284.
[421] Dulles, *A Church to Believe in: Discipleship and the Dynamics of Freedom* (New York: Crossroad, 1982), p. 16; *cf.* Dulles, *The Resilient Church,* p. 17; *cf.* GS 39, 72; *cf*. Pope Francis, Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii gaudium*, 24 November 2013, nos 176-237.

theological method accompanying this model 'may be called "secular-dialogic": secular because the church takes the world as a properly theological locus, and seeks to discern the signs of the time; dialogic, because it seeks to operate on the frontier between the contemporary world and the Christian tradition (including the bible), rather than simply apply the latter as a measure of the former.'[422] To Dulles, then, it is the idea of the 'church as servant' that best captures this attitude.

As regards the bond of union of the church as perceived by the servant model, Dulles says that it is felt as the sense of mutual brotherhood among those who join in Christian service to the world. Hence, it cuts across the traditional denominational divisions. The beneficiaries of the church, then, are not exclusively the members of the church itself. Rather they are all those who hear a word of comfort from the church, or obtain a respectful hearing from it, or receive material help from it. This model sees the mission of the church, not primarily in gaining new 'converts', but rather in assisting all peoples, wherever they are. The church is to keep alive the hope and aspirations of men and women for the kingdom of God and its values.[423]

Dulles explains that, in view of the above, the mission of the church demands that she is able to discern the signs of the times and to offer guidance and prophetic criticism in order to promote the mutual reconciliation of men and women, and initiate them in various ways into the kingdom of God. This, then, calls for a priesthood that turns 'outward to the larger society of mankind.' Hence, the servant leadership of the church entails pointing out the dangers of dehumanization and inspiring concrete initiatives for the transformation of human society according to the ideals of the kingdom of God.[424]

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[422] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 92; *cf*. his fall 1996 Laurence J. McGinley Lecture entitled, 'The Travails of Dialogue' in Dulles, *Church and Society*, p. 221; *cf*. GS 40.
[423] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 97.
[424] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, pp. 98, 173; *cf*. GS 39; *cf*. *Evangelii gaudium*, nos 238-41.

Dulles observes that in the previous four models, the church is viewed as the active subject acting upon the world as an object. However, he continues, the world has become increasingly active and independent of the church since the beginning of modern times – especially since the enlightenment. The various sciences, disciplines and governments have emancipated themselves from the church. On the other hand, the church had frequently pointed out that the world was falling into serious difficulties by disregarding church regulations. Dulles indicates that the papal encyclicals from Gregory XVI (1831-1846) to Pius XII (1939-1958) deplored what they saw as modern errors.[425]

John XXIII, however, brought a dramatic change of attitude: 'distrustful souls see only darkness burdening the face of the earth. We, instead, like to reaffirm all our confidence in our Saviour, who has not left the world he redeemed.'[426] Vatican II, which this pope inspired and convoked, took up this positive attitude towards the world. Hence, Dulles explains that Vatican II's *Gaudium et spes* (GS)

> recognizes the 'legitimate autonomy' of human culture and especially of the sciences[GS 59]; it calls upon the church to update itself – including its doctrine and institutional structures[GS 44]– so as to appropriate the best achievements of modern secular life. It affirms that the church must respect the accomplishments of the world and learn from them, lest it fall behind the times and become incapable of effectively heralding the gospel [GS 62]. Finally, it asserts that the church should consider itself as part of the total human family, sharing the same concerns as the rest of men.[427]

The theology of the church as servant, according to Dulles, has been taken up strongly since Vatican II. He refers to the pastoral letter, *The Servant Church* (1966), issued by Cardinal Cushing of Boston (USA), and the document on *Justice in the World* of the

[425] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, pp. 89-90.
[426] John XXIII, Apostolic Constitution*, Humanae salutis,* 25 December 1961, AAS 54 (1962), p. 6; English version: 'Pope John Convokes the Council' in W. M. Abbott (ed.), *The Documents of Vatican II* (New York: Guild, 1966), p. 704.
[427] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 91. In his further explanation, Dulles refers to GS 3, 92 as well.

1971 Synod of Bishops in Rome, as well as others.[428] Moreover, he notes that for the most part the official Catholic Church statements simply take up ideas previously developed by theologians. He then singles out Teilhard de Chardin and Dietrich Bonhoeffer as among the modern theologians who did the preparatory work on the new secular thrust in ecclesiology.[429]

Dulles explains that with de Chardin's background as an anthropologist and a priest, the latter feels there must be an ultimate unity 'between theology and science, between religion and technology, between the church and the world.' The synthesis of de Chardin is Christo-centric. He maintains that all the energies in the universe were ultimately converging on Christ, and hence on the church. Furthermore, de Chardin holds that the church is the main focal point of the energies of love in the world. Hence, to him, the church is necessary to prevent the vital energies of the world from becoming uselessly dissipated. On the other hand, the world is necessary to the church, lest the church should 'wither like a flower out of water'.[430]

Bonhoeffer, in turn, calls for a lowly and servant church. This is evident in his *Letters and Papers from Prison*, published posthumously: 'The church is the church only when it exists for others.… The church must share in the secular problems of ordinary human life, not dominating, but helping and serving.'[431] Both de Chardin and Bonhoeffer, Dulles explains further, 'tried to get the church to take seriously the secular achievements of modern man [and women] and they sought to ground their positive attitude toward the world theologically and christologically.' Dulles claims that nearly all the ecclesiologists

[428] *cf*. R. Cushing, *The Servant Church* (Boston: Daughters of St. Paul, 1966), pp. 6-8; Synod of Bishops, 'Convenientes ex universo', 30 November 1971, Rome, in E. Lora (ed.), *Enchiridion Vaticanum,* vol. 4 (Bologna: Dehoniane, 1978), nos 1238-1308.
[429] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, pp. 92-3.
[430] T. de Chardin, *The Divine Milieu* (New York: Harper, 1960), p. 138; *cf*. Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 94.
[431] D. Bonhoeffer, *Letters and Papers from Prison* (New York: MacMillan, 1967), pp. 203-4.

who have emerged into prominence since the early sixties, 'have been representative of this new style of secular-dialogic theology.' Among the Protestant and Anglican proponents of this ecclesiology, he mentions Gibson Winter, Harvey Cox and John A. T. Robinson. For Catholic proponents, he mentions Robert Adolfs, Eugene Bianchi and Richard P. McBrien, who wrote his doctoral thesis on John Robinson.[432]

In some of the secular theologians, such as Robinson, Winter, and Cox, Dulles observes that the eschaton as ultimate future almost disappears from view because of the importance attached to God's penultimate presence in the process of history. However, Dulles notes further that other theologies of the servant church, for instance as found in GS 39, take a strongly eschatologist standpoint.[433]

For the strengths of this model, Dulles mentions that it is a check to the 'egoistic' tendency of the church; that it makes the church relevant to the world and gives her a new sense of mission; and that it highlights the church's role of prophetic criticism of social institutions, and so it assists to make the world a better place. Like any other model, the servant model is not devoid of weaknesses. For these, Dulles mentions the following: it lacks any direct biblical foundation; its use of the term, *diakonia*, seems to be taken out of the biblical context; it is connected with the problem of how the church is related to the kingdom of God; and some proponents so emphasize the importance of peace, justice and prosperity in this life such that those who cannot attain them may lose hope.[434]

[432] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, pp. 95-6. Richard P. McBrien commenting on GS 3-4, writes: 'The ecclesiological theme is sounded at the outset: The church exists not alongside the world but within the world, and not in dominion over the world but as its *servant*' [McBrien, *Catholicism* (New York: Harper, 1994), p. 672].
[433] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, pp. 97, 118.
[434] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, pp. 98-102.

By rightly presenting 'church as servant' as a distinct model, Dulles calls our attention to a 'new' aspect of Catholic ecclesiology, which any holistic articulation of the 'mosaic' ecclesiology of Vatican II must take into consideration.

3.7 The Church as Community of Disciples

Dulles, as we mentioned earlier on, initially attempted to use the sacramental model as the basis for a systematic ecclesiology (section 3.4), but upon further reflection on 'the problem of finding a model that would harmonize the difference among the five' previous models, he proposes the model of the 'church as community of disciples'.[435] For though, like the rest, this new model alone is not adequate to the full reality of the church, he is convinced that it has the 'potentials as a basis for a comprehensive ecclesiology', seeing it a broadly inclusive one.[436] Dulles' choice of this model was inspired by a remark by John Paul II in his first encyclical, *Redemptor hominis*.[437] Having recalled the teaching of Pius XII on the church as the mystical body of Christ, John Paul II goes on to talk about the 'community of the people of God' and 'community of disciples' in the same breath.[438]

Among his five previous models, the 'mystical communion' is the first model that Dulles seeks to harmonize with the model of 'community of disciples'. He connects the new model with the communion model, while indicating the distinction between them. That is, though he sees the model of 'community of disciples' as a *variant of the communion* model, he says, 'it precludes the impression that ecclesial communion exists

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[435] Dulles, *A Church to Believe in*, p. 7; Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 206. In the 'preface' of the former book, Dulles states that the model 'of the church as community of disciples is in some ways a further refinement of ideas proposed in my book *Models of the Church* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1974)' [p. x]. According to him, the chapter one (entitled, 'Imaging the Church for the 1980s' of his *A Church to Believe in*, in which he considered the discipleship model) was originally a paper prepared for the *Conference of Apostolic Perspectives for the 1980s*, held by the New York Province of the Society of Jesus, June 18-20, 1980.

[436] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 207.

[437] John Paul II, Encyclical Letter, *Redemptor hominis*, 4 March, 1979, no. 21, AAS 71 (1979), p. 317.

[438] *cf*. Dulles, *A Church to Believe in*, p. 7; *cf.* Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 206; *cf*. Rymarz, 'The New Evangelization', p. 779; *cf.* J. Komonchak, 'All Dressed in Scarlet: Avery Dulles Goes to College', *Commonweal* (23 February 2001), p. 9.

merely for the sake of mutual gratification and support. It calls attention to the ongoing relationship of the church to Christ, its Lord, who continues to direct it through his Spirit.'[439]

He then examines two phases of discipleship in the bible: the pre-Easter and post-Easter phases. As regards the first phase, he writes:

> Some contemporary authors have great difficulty in answering the question whether Jesus intended to found, and did found, a church. While admitting certain complexities in this question, I would contend that the central difficulty is solved once one recognizes that Jesus did deliberately form and train a band of disciples, to whom he gave a share of his teaching and healing. 'Community of disciples' is precisely what Jesus undoubtedly did found, and once we recognize this fact we can apply to our life in the church many of the gospel passages dealing with discipleship.[440]

He is of the view that 'in the gospels Jesus depicts himself as being a disciple in relationship to his Father' (*cf*. John 5:19-20; Matt. 11:27).[441] Although Jesus was not the disciple of the Father in precisely the same sense that Peter, for instance, was a disciple of Jesus, Dulles claims that there are instructive resemblances: 'The disciple in the New Testament sense is always one who, like Jesus, has been called, and the call is attributed not only to Jesus but also to the Father. The call is an imperious one that overrides all other concerns and obligations, even the need to bury one's own father (Luke 9:59-60).'[442]

Evident here, says Dulles, is the intrinsic nature of the group as a 'contrast society, symbolically representing the new and renewed Israel', and the number 'twelve' of the inner group itself was symbolic of the twelve tribes of Israel, headed by the sons of Jacob.[443] Then, following the thoughts of Schillebeeckx,[444] Dulles says that after Easter, 'the concept of discipleship passed through a dramatic change. For the first time a

[439] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 206.
[440] Dulles, *A Church to Believe in*, p. 8.
[441] Dulles, *A Church to Believe in*, p. 8.
[442] Dulles, *A Church to Believe in,* pp. 8-9; *cf.* Rymarz, 'The New Evangelization', p.779.
[443] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 209.
[444] E. Schillebeeckx, *Jesus: An Experiment in Christology* (New York: Seabury, 1979), pp. 218-9.

community of disciples existed without the visible presence of the Master.'[445] This did not mean, he explains, that Jesus was absent; for he was present anytime the disciples gathered in his name (*cf*. Matt. 18:20). Thus, Jesus' presence was 'universalized' with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. Consequently, it was not surprising, according to Dulles, that

> the notion of discipleship was enlarged at this point. In the books of Acts … all Christian believers are called disciples, and the church itself is called the community of the disciples (Acts 6:2).… In the final verses of Matthew, the Eleven are commissioned to go and make disciples of all nations.… In many New Testament texts, therefore, the term 'disciples' may be taken as a virtual synonym for Christians or believers.[446]

Furthermore, Dulles notes that the close connection between the church and discipleship remained until after the conversion of Constantine: under the 'circumstances, the radical ethic of renunciation and non-violence had to yield to a more accommodating attitude toward ordinary social structures.' Nonetheless, the ideal of discipleship was not entirely lost. Particularly the religious life and subsequently the priesthood offered a more radical style of discipleship. Then, referring to Vatican II, he says that contemporary Catholicism does not limit discipleship to priests and vowed religious; the laity are also called disciples.[447]

Dulles also considers how the discipleship model connects with those of institution, sacrament, herald and servant. To link discipleship with the institutional model, Dulles examines leadership in the church. He says that this leadership 'is not a matter of simple delegation from the community, but an office depending on the gift and authorization of Christ.' Again, the 'pastors must be close to Christ in order to lead, but they must also be

[445] Dulles, *A Church to Believe in*, p. 9.
[446] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 211.
[447] Dulles, *Models of the Church,* pp. 213-4. Here, Dulles refers to Vatican II's *Decree on the Life and Ministry of Priests*, *Presbyterorum Ordinis*, 7 December 1965, no. 9. In addition, *Lumen gentium*, in its chapter on the call to holiness, says: Christ preached the holiness of life 'to each and every one of his *disciples without distinction*' (LG 40; the emphasis is ours). Thus, one can deduce from this text that Vatican II refers to all Christians as disciples; *cf*. Raymarz, 'The New Evangelization', pp. 779-80.

seen as disciples under the authority of the Chief Shepherd.' To prevent an unhealthy alienation, the pastors 'must resemble the Good Shepherd, who calls his sheep by name and whose voice is recognized as that of a trusted leader.' Thus, by interpreting office in terms of discipleship, Dulles bridges the gap between the institutional and 'community of disciples' models.[448]

He then links the discipleship model with that of the herald, mentioning that Vatican II asserts that every disciple is obliged to evangelize (AG 23). Dulles is convinced that 'in a church that has been renewed as a community of disciples, the generality of the members will feel involved in a kind of communal and missionary existence exemplified by the first disciples of Jesus.'[449] Subsequently, to link the discipleship and servant models, he refers to Paul VI's *Evangelii nuntiandi*, and explains: in our time the Catholic Church 'officially recognizes a close link between evangelization and the struggle for justice, development, peace and liberation in the world.'[450]

Dulles then looks at the strengths and weaknesses of the discipleship model by comparing it with the sacramental model, which was his initial key model. For the strengths, he begins by saying that, as in the sacramental model, the 'community of disciples' has its origins in Christ, who instituted it in his earthly ministry and later energized it by his Spirit (*cf.* Acts 2:33). Secondly, the disciples visibly represent Christ (*cf.* Luke 10:16). Thirdly, Jesus is really present in the community of the disciples. Finally, Christ's presence in the community is dynamic and effective (*cf.* John 15:5, 8). Thus, Dulles remarks that the two models express much the same reality. However, the community of disciple's model, in his view, has certain advantages over the sacramental

[448] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 217.
[449] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 221; *cf*. Rymarz, 'The New Evangelization', p. 781.
[450] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 221; *cf*. Paul VI, Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii nuntiandi*, 8 December 1975, no. 31, AAS 68 (1976), p. 26.

model. 'The latter has an impersonal ring, and suggests that the church is without defect. Community of disciples, however, suggests that the church is deficient; that it stands under correction, and calls for a personal response on the part of its members.'[451] Besides, it has a good biblical foundation.

With regard to the weaknesses, Dulles considers three objections to this model, which, he says, can be answered to. Firstly, according to him, some say this model presents the church as a contrast society, tending to isolate Christians. Nonetheless, says Dulles, fidelity to Christ naturally brings this tension. The second objection is that it makes excessive demand on the average Christian. In response to this objection, he says that Christ's call to 'carry your cross and follow me' is to all Christians. Thirdly, it is said that this model seems to imply that the church is a free association of individuals who wish to volunteer for generous service. This, Dulles believes, is a misunderstanding of the model; for discipleship is always preceded by a call from Christ, which is mediated by the church.[452]

Dulles concludes by saying that the sixth model 'is only one perspective on the church.'[453] Therefore, it

> is not intended to take the place of all the other images and descriptions. The more traditional images of people of God, body of Christ, and temple of the Holy Spirit, retain their validity. In some respects, they surpass the discipleship model in expressing the theological basis of the church in the self-communication of the divine Trinitarian life. Community of disciples, however, has the advantages of being closer to our experience and of suggesting directions for appropriate renewal.[454]

For Dulles, then, whereas the various models of the church should be taken together for a more comprehensive understanding of the mystery of the church, *the community of*

[451] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, pp. 223-4.
[452] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, pp. 224-6.
[453] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 226
[454] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 222.

disciples is the primary one. We, however, following our arguments in the first two chapter (*cf*. subsections 1.5.4, 2.5.1-2.5.6) and some further observations made in the next section (3.8), wish to maintain the broader notion of 'communion' as the key model for the articulation of a post-conciliar systematic ecclesiology. Moreover, it is the primary model of communion that the church in Africa is endeavouring to contextualize as 'family of God' as key to Catholic ecclesiology.

3.8 Evaluation

The evaluation of the models' approach of Dulles is outlined as follows: the mystery and method, a critique of some of the individual models, and the complementary nature of the models. We wish to precede the consideration of these points with a brief critique of the use of terminologies by Dulles. Though Dulles makes distinctions among the terms, images, symbols, models and paradigms,[455] we concur with Terrence Merrigan and Joji Kallingal that Dulles has the tendency to use these terms as well as other terms (e.g. metaphors, types, theories and analogies) interchangeably.[456] His work, therefore, needs some consistency in the use of these terms.

3.8.1 Mystery and Method

Giuseppe Colombo claims that Dulles only presumes but does not define what he means by the mystery of the church.[457] On the contrary, in line with the Theological Commission of Vatican II (*cf*. section 1.1), Dulles presents the Pauline notion of the

[455] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, pp. 18-25.
[456] T. Merrigan, 'Models in the Theology of Avery Dulles: A Critical Analysis', *Bijdragen, Tijdschrift voor Filosofie en Theologie*, 52 (1993), p. 148; J. Kallingal, 'The Models Ecclesiology of Avery Cardinal Dulles in the Light of Vatican II', Ph.D. thesis extract (Pontifical Gregorian University, Rome 2004), pp. 25-6. In the following pages, for instance, Dulles uses the terms, models, theories, images and metaphors interchangeably: *Models of the Church*, pp. 27-32, 222.
[457] G. Colombo, 'Il "Popolo di Dio" e il "mistero" della chiesa nell' ecclesiologia post-conciliare', *Teologia*, 10 (1985), p. 150.

mystery of the church, before attempting to comprehend it with the method of models.[458] Secondly, like the Spanish Bishops' Conference (*cf*. subsection 1.5.3), Colombo seems to wonder about the viability of the models-method of Dulles: how can the sociologically constructed models aid in comprehending what the church is in itself?[459] In our reading of Dulles' work, however, it appears that the point of departure of Dulles' construction of the first five models (the basis of Colombo's critique) is not the employment of sociological concepts, but rather the identification of the major approaches or types of ecclesiologies of other theologians. Consequently, in those cases where some theologians have already used sociological categories (e.g. church as institution), Dulles may also use such categories. On the other hand, one may ask if the model of sacrament, for instance, is a sociological category. In any case, as biblical and patristic ecclesiological images are drawn from social (e.g. people, bride, household), biological (body), agricultural (vine-branches, shepherd-sheep), architectural (e.g. temple, building) and other aspects of human experience, what would be wrong with Dulles drawing from sociological categories, as long as he reflectively and critically employs them, as we saw in his definition of models (*cf*. subsection 1.5.3)? Besides, Vatican II's use of several biblico-patristic images to describe the church is a revival of a theological tradition which calls our attention to the fact that purely conceptual-speculative theology is not sufficient to articulate the mysteries of faith.[460]

Thirdly, Colombo thinks that Dulles does not determine the church-subject. He feels that this eludes Dulles because of the nature of his methodology.[461] But it appears that Dulles considers the church-subject in his *Models of the Church*, especially in his chapters

[458] Dulles, *Models of the Church* (1974), pp. 21-2.
[459] Colombo, 'Il "Popolo di Dio" e il "mistero" della chiesa', p. 148; *cf*. K. Baker, 'Five Different Views of the Church', *Homiletics and Pastoral Review*, 75 (1974), p. 75 (this was a book review on the *Models of the Church*).
[460] Dianich et al, *Trattato sulla chiesa*, pp. 153-6; *cf*. Kallingal, 'The Models Ecclesiology', pp. 28-9.
[461] Colombo, 'Il "Popolo di Dio" e il "mistero" della chiesa', p.150.

on 'The Church and Eschatology' and 'The True Church'.[462] He further considers the church-subject in his other theological writings published both before and after the critique of Colombo.[463]

3.8.2 Critique of Individual Models[464]

Let us now consider a critique of Dulles' articulation of some of the models. In his work, Dulles deliberately considers the initial five models narrowly so as to delineate them as sharply as possible in mutual contrast.[465] In doing so, he seems to have exaggerated in some of his presentations. A specific case in point is Dulles' articulation of the institutional model of the church. Robert Royal says that Dulles 'downplayed the institutional dimension' of the church;[466] Kenneth Baker says that the institutional model is the 'most antithetical' of Dulles' models;[467] and James Gaffney accuses Dulles for being part of the movement against the institutional model in the 1980s.[468] Reviewing these criticisms, Kallingal asserts that he 'cannot accept the objections of these writers against Dulles to the effect that he is guilty of an anti-institutional attitude and approach toward the church.'[469] While agreeing with Kallingal, one cannot deny that there is some truth in the above criticisms; this is supported by Dulles' own self-admission that writing at a time when institutions of all kinds were under scrutiny, he might have been too severe in his

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[462] Dulles, *Models of the Church* (1987), pp. 103-38.
[463] *cf*. Dulles, *A Church to Believe in*, pp. ix-x, 1-18; *cf*. Dulles, *The Catholicity of the Church* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1985), pp. 13-87; *cf*. Dulles, *Church and Society*, pp. 262-73, 442-53.
[464] Though Dulles considers how each of his initial five models promotes or hinders ecumenism, he does not construct a specific model for ecumenical dialogue. Secondly, he has no model for interreligious dialogue, which is another important aspect of the conciliar theology of the church (though in a later work he presents various types or models of interreligious dialogue, namely, 'coercion', 'convergence', 'pluralism' and 'tolerance' [Dulles, 'Christ Among the Religions' in *Church and Society*, pp. 360-72]). Considering the importance of ecumenical and interreligious dialogue in Vatican II, while keeping in mind the need to minimize the number of models, a seventh model with the name 'dialogue' could be constructed to conceptualize these dialogues. This is, however, not within the scope of this study.
[465] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 206.
[466] R. Royal, 'Avery Dulles' Long Road to Rome', *Crisis*, 19 (July 2001), p. 21.
[467] Baker, 'Five Different Views of the Church', p. 74.
[468] J. Gaffney, 'From Models of the Church to Models of the Model', *America*, 155 (1986), pp. 377-80.
[469] Kallingal, 'The Models Ecclesiology', p. 28.

presentation of the institutional model. Some of the objections to this model, we agree with Dulles, could be taken care of if the *institution* is understood not in the abstractions of modern sociology, but in terms of what God 'instituted' in Christ.[470]

Secondly, Colombo thinks the distinction Dulles makes between church 'as institution' and 'as mystical community' is probably due to the latter's lack of appreciation of the church 'as people of God' as the dominant category of *Lumen gentium*. He adds that the distinction Dulles makes has been influenced by the tendency to contrast, rather than to synthesize, in accordance with the antonym inherent in the pair derived from sociology: *Gesellschaft-Gemeinde*. Perceiving the church with the sociology category of *Gesellschaft*, he says, Dulles links the church 'as institution' with the pre-conciliar *societas perfecta*, losing even its historical justification. On the other hand, in the perspective of the category of *Gemeinde*, he says, Dulles seems to prejudge the ecclesiology of *Lumen gentium*. In other words, he says, Dulles 'identifies' the two metaphors of 'people of God' and 'body of Christ', instead of 'distinguishing' them, and ends up preferring the latter, knowing well that Vatican II rather considers the former as the principal metaphor.[471]

Probably if Colombo considers the ecclesiology of Vatican II as a 'point of departure' (and not as a fully systematized ecclesiology), he might see Dulles' approach in a bit different light. Dulles certainly acknowledges the dominance of 'people of God' in *Lumen gentium*. However, he has decided to work with a limited number of models and in doing so some metaphors and images have to be grouped together, according to their common characteristics. Besides, it is not true that Dulles identifies the two metaphors and makes no distinctions between, for he mentions both their similarities and dissimilarities (*cf.*

[470] *cf.* Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 205; *cf.* T.G. Guarino, 'Why Avery Dulles Matters', *First Things* (May 2009), p. 41, http://www.firstthings.com/article/2009/04/why-avery-dulles-matters-1243317340 (accessed on 16 February 2012); *cf.* Kehl, *La chiesa*, pp. 259-62.
[471] Colombo, 'Il "Popolo di Dio" e il "mistero" della chiesa', p. 108.

section 3.3); and how can Dulles prefer one to the other if he makes no distinction between them, as Colombo allergies. Dulles' preference of 'body of Christ' is not based on a prejudgment; rather he is of the opinion that this metaphor instead of the 'people of God' brings out clearly 'what is new in the New Covenant, namely that men [and women] are bought into consciously affirmed filial relationship to God' in Christ Jesus. Besides, it avoids the 'egoistical and monopolistic' tones of the 'people of God'.[472] Furthermore, one may also ask if Colombo is rather not 'prejudging' Dulles in what follows: it appears that Colombo's comments on the use of the sociological categories of *Gesellschaft-Gemeinde* by Dulles is partly based on former's misconception that the latter refers to the second model as 'mystical *community*'[473] while actually it is 'mystical *communion*'.

Thirdly, regarding the sacramental model Colombo once again seems to detect an error in Dulles' work. He claims Dulles is misleading for stating that Henri de Lubac preceded Karl Rahner and Otto Semmelroth in articulating the church as sacrament. However, we observe that Salvador Pié-Ninot, for instance, seems to agree with Dulles' position;[474] and Kasper is even more explicit: 'In our own century, the viewpoint [of church as sacrament] was developed *first of all* by French-speaking theologians, especially Henri de Lubac.'[475] Congar, probably settles the case with the nuance that though the French scholars (de Lubac, Daniélou, and himself) preceded the German scholars in considering the idea of the church as sacrament, they did not articulate a systematic treatise. He adds that

[472] Dulles, *Models of the Church* (1987), pp. 53-5; *cf*. C. O'Donnell, 'The People of God' in A. Flannery (ed.), *Vatican II: The Church Constitution* (Dublin: Scepter, 1966), p. 54; K. McNamara, 'The People of God' in K. McNamara (ed.), *The Church: A Theological and Pastoral Commentary on the Constitution on the Church* (Dublin: Veritas, 1983), p. 105.
[473] Colombo, 'Il "Popolo di Dio" e il "mistero" della chiesa', p. 108.
[474] S. Pié-Ninot, *Ecclesiologia: La sacramentalità della comunità Cristiana* (Brescia: Queriniana, 2008), p.74.
[475] W. Kasper, *Theology and Church* (New York: Crossroad, 1989), p. 114.

the first systematic treatment of the church as sacrament was done by Semmelroth, followed by Rahner.[476]

A fourth critique concerns Dulles' choice of a primary model. In replacing the sacramental model with the model of 'community of disciples' – a variant of the *communion* model – as the key model for a systematic ecclesiology,[477] it could be said that, like many other post-conciliar ecclesiologists, Dulles uses the *koinōnia* as the basis of his ecclesiology.[478] Mark S. Massa attests to this:

> If any of the models were to be privileged in the context of American Catholicism, Dulles believed that the 'communion' model had 'special merit.' This was so because it preserved the institutional realities of Catholicism within a much larger set of loyalties: the external offices and laws were important not in themselves, but because they served as a 'vivid sign' of a deeper community of shared love and compassion *(agape* in the New Testament) that transcended laws, officers, and rituals.[479]

On the other hand, the *community of disciples*,[480] as a 'synthetic model'[481] of both 'communion' and 'discipleship', does not fulfil Dulles' intention of presenting '*irreducible distinct* models'.[482] Secondly, though he uses the terms 'community of disciples' and 'discipleship' interchangeably, he could employ only the latter term. And in doing so, he could limit the sixth model to only what is distinctive of the Christian understanding of discipleship: the Christian's ongoing relationship with Jesus Christ – a relationship in which one is enabled by the Holy Spirit to become like his/her Master; the demand of total commitment of disciples which overrides all other concerns and obligations; the need for

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[476] Y. Congar, *Un popolo messianico: La chiesa, sacramento di salvezza. La salvezza e la liberazione* (Brescia: Queriniana, 1976), pp. 56-7; the original French edition is: Congar, *Un peuple messianique: L'Église, sacrament du salut. Salut et libération* (Paris: Cerf, 1975).
[477] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 206; *cf.* Dulles, *The Resilient Church*, p. 26.
[478] *cf.* G. Vodopivec, 'La chiesa è comunione', in E. Ancilli (ed.), *La chiesa sacramento di comunione* (Roma: Teresianum, 1979), p. 212.
[479] Massa, 'A Model Theologian: The Legacy of Avery Dulles', p.16.
[480] 'Community' is an aspect of the horizontal dimension of the 'communion' model.
[481] Gleeson, 'Images, Understandings, and Models', p.1.
[482] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 28; *cf*. Guarino, 'Why Avery Dulles Matters', p. 41.

constant renewal; the element of contrast to society; etc. In this work, therefore, we consider 'discipleship' as a distinct model and maintain 'communion' as the primary model.

Furthermore, in the construction of his models, Dulles seems to concentrate mainly on Catholic and Protestant ecclesiologies.[483] His work could be further enriched, if the main ecclesiological trends of the Oriental churches are taken into consideration. Referring to the legitimate variety in the theological expressions between the Catholic and Oriental churches, Vatican II says: 'it is hardly surprising, then, if sometimes one tradition has come nearer to a full appreciation of some aspects of a mystery of revelation than the other, or has expressed them better. In such cases, these various theological formulations are often to be considered complementary rather than conflicting' (UR 17). Dulles could, therefore, enrich his presentation of the communion model with the Orientals' notions of *koinōnia* and eucharistic ecclesiology.[484] Their emphasis on the pneumatological aspect of the church could also enrich his ecclesiology in general.[485]

3.8.3 Complementarity of Models

Vatican II has not only sanctioned an authentic diversity in 'the theological elaborations of revealed truth' (UR 4),[486] the council also employs it in its teachings. And on the theology of the church in particular, Vatican II presents us with a 'mosaic' of

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[483] Dulles, *Models of the Church* (1974), pp. 13-4.

[484] In Dulles' spring 1993 Laurence J. McGinley Lecture on the topic 'The Church as Communion', he acknowledges that he has 'greatly profited' from reading some comments on the topic by the Orthodox theologian, John Meyendorff (Dulles, *Church and Society*, p. 129). He, however, does not incorporate the new insights into his 'communion model' in the third edition of *Models of the Church* (2002), published almost a decade later. Fortunately though, in his fall 2004 lecture on 'A Eucharistic Church: The Vision of John Paul II', Dulles incorporates some ideas of John Meyendorff and other Orthodox theologians (Nicholas Afanassieff and John Zizioulas) (Dulles, *Church and Society*, pp. 449-50). Kasper, in turn, speaks of how his encounter with the Orthodox helped him to develop the *eucharistic* dimension of his ecclesiology of communion (Kasper, *La Chiesa di Gesù Cristo*, p. 23).

[485] *cf.* H.-M. Legrand, 'Lo sviluppo di chiese-soggetto', in Alberigo (ed.), *L'ecclesiologia del Vaticano II*, p. 139; Fransen, 'La comunione ecclesiale principio di vita', p. 165; Vodopivec, 'La chiesa è comunione', pp. 236, 238. Furthermore, critiques of the herald and servant models can be found in subsections 4.6.2 and 4.7.1 respectively.

[486] Guarino, 'Why Avery Dulles Matters', p. 41.

theologies of the church; this has been the backdrop of the ecclesiology of Dulles. Thomas G. Guarino affirms this: 'it was this concern for an admissible diversity within a faithful unity that motivated much of Dulles' work. How could many images and models be meshed so the beauty of the church would be properly manifested?'[487] Glenn B. Siniscalchi, in turn, captures succinctly how Dulles, to a great extent, succeeds in addressing this concern: 'Dulles convincingly argued that the diverse conceptions of the church proposed by theologians throughout history have been complementary rather than contradictory.'[488] And underlying Dulles' complementary manner of perceiving things is his use of the Catholic principle of 'both/and'. Robert P. Imbelli explains this principle: 'God is both one and three. The Lord Jesus is both God and man. The church is both institutional and charismatic. There is no merely invisible church, no non-institutional church. Yet the institutional dimension of church is at the service of the charismatic.'[489]

By seeing the several models of the church as complementary, Dulles succinctly describes the 'salient features' of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church as follows: it is made up of the disciples of Christ (model 6), constituted as 'a communion of grace (model 2) structured as a human society (model 1). While sanctifying its own members, it offers praise and worship to God (model 3). It is permanently charged with the responsibility of spreading the good news of the gospel (model 4) and of healing and consolidating the human community (model 5).'[490]

On the other hand Colombo, quite like the Spanish Bishops' Conference (*cf.* subsection 1.5.3), holds that it is very easy for one to superficially accept the complementarity of the various themes (models) of Vatican II as the solution of the

[487] Guarino, 'Why Avery Dulles Matters', p. 41.
[488] G.B. Siniscalchi, 'Conciliar Rhetoric: An Integrated Model of Catholic Defense', *The Heythrop Journal,* 52 (2011), p. 1.
[489] R. Imbelli, 'A Tribute to Cardinal Avery Dulles', *L'Osservatore Romano*, Weekly English Edition, 24-31 December 2008, p. 8; *cf*. Imbelli, 'Foreword' in Dulles, *Church and Society*, p. xi.
[490] Dulles*, Models of the Church*, p. 204.

inexhaustibility and indefinability of the mystery of the church. And he thinks Dulles is doing exactly that by synchronically juxtaposing the different models to constitute a whole.[491] It is true that Dulles, by employing the models simultaneously, perceives them synchronically. However, if Dulles' premise that no amount of models can fully describe the mystery of church is taken into consideration, then he could not be accused of 'superficially' juxtaposing the models. Dulles' consciousness of his premise is quite evident in the above citation: by referring to the elements of the church described by the tool of the six models as 'salient features', he implies that there are other features of the church not accounted for by the models.

The above point notwithstanding, it might be necessary to introduce another concept into the whole thought process to account for the gap between the 'summation' of the *salient features* (described with the aid of models) and the mystery of the church. What comes to mind here is the concept of *synergy*. Synergy is the working together or interaction of two or more elements or substances to produce a result greater than the sum of their individual effects.[492] For example, the elements of hydrogen (H) and oxygen (O) combine to give water (H_2O), which is, in a sense, greater than the sum of their individual effects. By analogy, it could be said that the mystery of the church is greater than the 'summation' of her *salient features*, described by the tool of several complementary models. However, there is a difference in the employment of the concept of synergy: unlike in the empirical sciences, the various ecclesial features (constitutive elements) do not 'produce' the church. It is rather like dealing with a *reverse process* of synergy. That is, we begin with the complex reality of the church and then come to the realization that though it has certain constitutive elements, their 'summation' is less than the reality itself.

[491] Colombo, 'Il "Popolo di Dio" e il "mistero" della chiesa', p. 107.
[492] http://oxforddictionaries.com/us/definition/american_english/synergy (accessed on 17 September 2013).

Furthermore, Colombo says that it will be a distortion to diachronically use the models such that they follow each other in function, giving reason for a kind of *cultural evolution*.[493] Though Dulles presents the models or the succession of paradigm shifts in a chronological manner, he does so as to place his elaborations in a historical context and not in view of suggesting a cultural evolution. If Dulles had in mind a kind of cultural evolution, then one would have expected that in the first edition of his *Models of the Church* (which is the basis of Colombo's critique), he would have considered the then more recent model (servant), rather than the 'church as sacrament', as the primary model.

Convinced of the validity and utility of his complementary multi-models approach, Dulles justifies its continuous relevance almost three decades after the first edition of his *Models of the Church* was published. And so he writes in the introduction to his third edition: 'this can be illustrated by reference to Pope John Paul II, whose writings have normative value for Catholics of our day.' Consequently, in this latest edition, Dulles includes an appendix: 'The Ecclesiology of John Paul II'.[494]

The pope, according Dulles, 'exhibits a marked preference for the *communio* model, but he expounds it in a way that takes cognizance of the merits of the other models, such as those depicting the church as institution, sacrament, herald, and servant.' He 'subordinates the institutional and the external to the communal and the spiritual. But he also uses the category of sacramentality to integrate the visible and invisible, the external and the internal.'[495]

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[493] Colombo, 'Il "Popolo di Dio" e il "mistero" della chiesa', p. 107.
[494] Dulles, *Models of the Church* (2002), p. ix (new introduction). The appendix, 'The Ecclesiology of John Paul II', had previously appeared as an article in *Origins* 28/44 (22 April 1999), pp. 756-63, and in P.C. Phan (ed.), *The Gift of the Church: A Textbook on Ecclesiology in Honour* of *Patrick Granfield* (Collegeville: Liturgical, 2000), pp. 93-110.
[495] Dulles, *Models of the Church* (2002), p. 240.

We are adopting the multi-models approach because we are also convinced of its continuous usefulness, and this position is supported by other theologians other than Dulles himself.[496] Before concluding this chapter, we wish to acknowledge the fact that some theologians, following the lead of Dulles, have proposed additional ecclesial models. Gerhard Lohfink and Norbert Lohfink propose the model of church as a 'contrast society'.[497] This model is, however, a *variant* of the 'discipleship' model. John Fuellenbach, in turn, adopts the 'contrast society' model and proposes another model: 'church as basic Christian communities'.[498] But the latter is rather a *pastoral* model based on the ecclesiological model of communion. Therefore, the proposed models of the Lohfinks and Fuellenbach do not appear to us as distinct ecclesiological models. Finally, the church in Africa is proposing the model 'church-family of God'. This is however not a distinct model; it is rather an attempt to contextualize the model of communion.

3.9 Conclusion

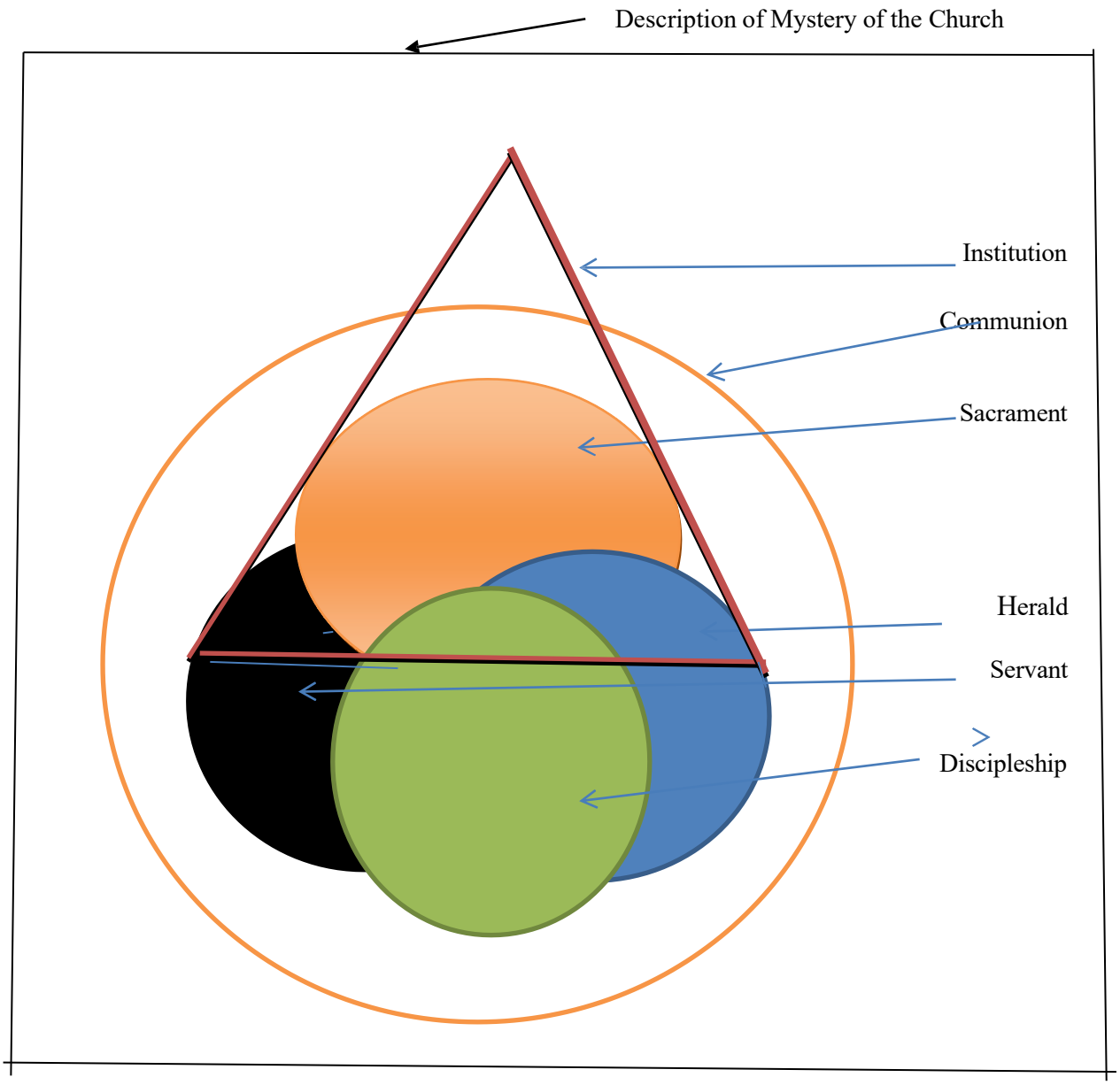
With a kind of 'renewal in continuity' to the approach of Dulles, we see the following as the six *distinct* models with which to work: communion, discipleship, institution, sacrament, herald, and servant. Like Dulles, we perceive these models as complementary; but probably more evidently than he does, we consider 'communion' as the primary model. Using these models, then, one could portray the articulation of the 'mosaic' ecclesiology of Vatican II with the diagram (figure 2) below.

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[496] In chapter one (subsection 1.5.3), we have stated the arguments in favour of the continuous relevance of Dulles' models-method made by J.H. Kroeger, E.A. Schneider and others. One may also refer to Kallingal, 'The Models Ecclesiology', pp. 31-2.

[497] G. Lohfink, *Does God Need the Church: Towards a Theology of the People of God* (Collegeville: Liturgical, 1999), pp. 51-120; N. Lohfink, *Option for the Poor: The Basic Principle of Liberation Theology in the Light of the Bible* (Berkeley: Bibal, 1987), pp. 48-52; *cf.* Gleeson, 'Images, Understandings, and Models', pp. 25-6.

[498] J. Fuellenbach, *Church: Community for the Kingdom* (New York: Orbis, 2002), pp. 171-207; *cf.* Gleeson, 'Images, Understandings, and Models', pp. 23-5.



(Figure 2: A diagram showing an articulation of the 'mosaic' ecclesiology of Vatican II using models)

It should be stated in the first place that the diagram does not portray the models as constitutive elements of the church. Rather it depicts how the models aid us to describe the mystery of the church. Secondly, allocating the largest circle to the 'communion' model, the diagram shows that the church is primarily (essentially) a communion with God and among his faithful. This model 'encompasses' entirely the theologies of the church as 'people of God', 'body of Christ', 'temple of the Holy Spirit', 'community', etc.; hence they are not depicted as distinct models. Thirdly, the circles of the models of 'discipleship',

'sacrament', 'herald' and 'servant' are placed within the largest circle to show that they describe aspects of the church which are secondary to her aspect of communion with God and among his faithful.

Fourthly, the 'triangle' of the institutional model should have been entirely within the circle of 'communion', for 'institution' is secondary to and at the service of church as communion. However, as noted in Dulles' articulation above (*cf*. section 3.2), Vatican II's theology of the church as institution is more prominent than that of its biblico-patristic origin. Another point illustrated by the diagram is that the five circles and the triangle do not fill the entire *rectangle* which represents the *description* of the mystery of the church. This reminds us to cautiously attend to our theological work keeping in mind the principle of *synergy*: though the complementary application of several models is a very useful theological approach, no number of models would be adequate to fully express the complex nature of the mystery of the church.

Having attempted to hone the multi-models' theological tool in this chapter, the stage is now set to articulate (in the next chapter) a systematic communion-based ecclesiology by the harmonization of the models.

CHAPTER FOUR: HARMONIZATION OF THE MODELS OF THE CHURCH

4.1 Introduction

As indicated in the conclusion of the preceding chapter, we are adopting Dulles' methodology, in a fashion of 'renewal in continuity', to construct a systematic communion-based multi-models ecclesiology. The construction involves the harmonization of the primary model of communion with the discipleship, institution, sacrament, herald and servant models. This process of harmonization is based on the assumption that these models mutually complement each other. Ideally this would involve working simultaneously with all the six models: 'by a kind of mental juggling act, we have to keep several models in the air at once.'[499] Theoretically, then, this means perceiving the models synchronically. And this is done with the understanding that, as in a process of synergy, the 'summation' of the *salient features* of the church (which are articulated by the multi-models' theological tool) is less than the mystery itself.

On the practical level, however, it would be either too cumbersome or nearly impossible to synchronically articulate all the six models of the church. It is rather easier, after presenting the primary model, to articulate (as Dulles does) two models at a time in a sequential manner. The sequence we wish to follow (unlike that of Dulles) is not based on chronology but on the characteristic natures of the models. For this reason, we have attempted a classification of the six models as follows: (a) the communion and discipleship models focus mainly on the *inner* nature of the church; that is, both of them deal mainly with what the church is in itself; (b) the models of institution and sacraments deal with the *instrumental* nature of the church; that is, the 'institution' is a means (instrument) for the

[499] Dulles, *Models of the Church*, 3rd ed. (New York: Doubleday, 2002), p. 2.

nurturing, unity and growth of the church, while the 'sacrament' is a sign and instrument of salvation; and (c) the models of herald and servant obviously concern the *missionary* nature of the church. We do not rule out any overlapping in the categorization, but we think that in this light, we can consequently deal with the *inner*, *instrumental* and *missionary* natures of the church in a *sequential* manner. Thus, it is in this sense that the models are articulated 'diachronically' as well, and not with the intention for engendering a cultural evolution, as Colombo seems to understand it (*cf*. subsection 3.8.3). In short, pairs of models are considered at a time, while maintaining the communion model constant in each pairing.

There is also another sense in which this work is a 'renewal in continuity' to the approach of Dulles. He says that the various models 'should be made to interpenetrate and mutually qualify one another'.[500] This is what we are referring to as a 'symbiosis' among the models. That is, as in the symbiotic process of biology, the synchronization of the ecclesiological models brings about mutual 'benefits', in the sense that their strengths could mutually compensate for their deficiencies. We observe, however, that Dulles seems to focus mainly on how the primary model compensates for the deficiencies in each of the other models. So, in furtherance to his work, we attempt to articulate both how the primary model qualifies the other models, and how the latter, in turn, qualify the former. Therefore, in this chapter, in the harmonization of each pair of models, besides considering how the two models are linked together, we look at how the strengths of 'communion' makes up for the weaknesses of the other models and vice versa, in a kind of 'symbiosis'.

[500] Dulles, *Models of the Church* (2002), p. 24. Speaking of 'concepts' rather than 'models', Joseph Ratzinger makes the same point. He says that for Vatican II, the mystery of the church should be comprehended with diverse concepts which interpenetrate each other and are complementary [Ratzinger, 'Alcuni aspetti della chiesa intesa come comunione' in J. Capmany et al, *La chiesa mistero di comunione per la missione: Un contributo teologico e pastorale* (Roma: Urbaniana, 1997), p. 57].

4.2 Primary Model: Church as Communion

Let us now look at the primary model itself. We are adopting the meaning of the term 'communion' (*koinōnia*) traced in the works of Bori, Franco, Dianich, John Paul II, Kasper, Tillard, Ratzinger, among others (*cf*. section 2.5). Secondly, we are assuming the distinction Dianich and Noceti have made between 'communion' and community' (*cf*. subsection 2.5.4a). Thirdly, following the works of the above authors as well as those of Rigal, Doyle and Markey, we articulate 'church as communion' as a complex multi-dimensional reality, giving priority to the vertical dimension of the relationship between the triune God and the faithful (*cf*. section 2.6). Fourthly, in this presentation, we wish to categorize the many dimensions of church as communion (*koinōnia*) into four: (a) vertical-invisible, (b) vertical-visible, (c) horizontal-invisible, and (d) horizontal-visible. We hope that this approach coupled with the process of harmonization with other models may enable us to avert some of the pitfalls that *Communionis notio* cautions against, as well as harness its '*other* aspects'[501] which Doyle draws our attention to.

4.2.1 Vertical-Invisible Dimension

The *vertical-invisible* dimension of communion of the church is the most fundamental, and it is prior to all the other dimensions.[502] This dimension is the communion of the faithful with God the Father, through Jesus Christ and in the Holy Spirit. Originating from the loving and gratuitous initiative of the triune God,[503] the church is

[501] In this chapter, we are using the term '*other* aspects' to refer to both the 'points that lay out the basic context' of *Communionis notio* and the 'points acknowledged or mentioned or conceded' by *Communionis notio* as outlined in D. Doyle, *Communion Ecclesiology: Vision and Versions* (New York: Orbis, 2000), pp. 129-30; *cf*. subsection 2.5.6b of this study.

[502] *cf*. *Communionis notio* no. 3; J. Ratzinger, *La comunione nella chiesa* (Cinisello Balsamo: San Paolo, 2004), p. 73; the original German edition is: Ratzinger, *Weggemeinschaft des Glaubens: Kirche als Communio* (Augsburg: Sankt Ulrich, 2002).

[503] *cf*. Benedict XVI, Encyclical Letter, *Deus caritas est*, 25 December 2005, no. 12; *cf*. Francis, Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii gaudium*, 42 November, 2013, no. 111.

patterned on the communion of the Holy Trinity.[504] God, who is a communion of three Persons, and who has created men and women in *his image and likeness* (Gen. 1:26), wills to bring them 'to a participation of the divine life' (LG 2; *cf*. 2 Pet. 1:4), not merely as individuals but a people (LG 9). Thus, one could say that the church was created in the *image and likeness* of the *communion* of the *triune* God.[505]

Flowing from this trinitarian character of the church as communion is its christological character: the communion between God and humans is established through the incarnatio-paschal mystery of Jesus Christ. In the first place, the Word of God becoming flesh (the incarnation) is the communion-between-God-and-humans *par excellence*.[506] And it is in this state of perfect God-man union that Jesus Christ shed his blood to seal the New Covenant, 'calling together a people made up of Jew and gentile, making them one, not according to the flesh but in the Spirit. This was to be the new people of God' (LG 9). This people (the church) is not only inextricably linked with the 'event' (incarnatio-paschal mystery) of Christ, but she is so intimately bonded with the 'person' of Christ such that she can rightly be called the 'body of Christ' (LG 7). Consequently, the members of the church are being formed to be like Christ, the first born from the dead (*cf*. Col. 1:15-18), who is in eternal communion with the Father and the Holy Spirit.[507]

Another feature deriving from the trinitarian nature of the church as communion is its pneumatological character:[508] 'When the work which the Father gave the Son to do on earth (*cf*. John 17:4) was accomplished, the Holy Spirit was sent on the day of Pentecost in order that he might continually sanctify the church, and thus, all those who believe would

[504] *cf*. G. Greshake, *Il Dio Unitrino: Teologia trinitaria* (Brescia: Queriniana, 2008), p. 435.
[505] *cf*. Greshake, *Il Dio Unitrino*, p. 431.
[506] *cf*. Ratzinger, *La comunione nella chiesa*, pp. 78-81, 84; *cf*. W. Kasper, *La chiesa di Gesù Cristo: Scritti di ecclesiologia* (Brescia: Queriniana, 2011), p. 369.
[507] *cf*. Greshake, *Il Dio Unitrino*, pp. 431-2.
[508] *cf*. Greshake, *Il Dio Unitrino*, pp. 432-3.

have access through Christ in one Spirit to the Father (*cf*. Eph. 2:18)' [LG 4]. The Holy Spirit, who effected the union *par excellence* of the God-man in the womb of Mary, exists 'as one and the same being in the head and in the members,' giving life to, unifying and moving through the whole body (LG 7).[509] In view of this life-giving in-dwelling of the Holy Spirit, he is rightly called the soul of the church (LG 7), while the church-communion could be described as the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 3:16-17; 6:19; LG 4).[510]

The gratuitous reaching out of the triune God requires the human response to complete the vertical communion. Men and women respond to this invitation to enter into and remain in communion with God by faith and love. With regard to the faith-response, *Lumen gentium* states that 'God gathered together as one all those who in *faith* look upon Jesus as the author of salvation and the source of unity and peace, and established them as the church' (LG 9). And using the deutero-Pauline imagery of the loving union between groom and bride, *Lumen gentium* speaks of the submissive love-response appropriate to the ineffable love which God has shown us in the incarnatio-paschal mystery of Christ (LG 6).[511]

Furthermore, in view of the holiness of the triune God, those called to become the *image and likeness* of the *divine communion* have also been called to a life of holiness: 'be holy for I the Lord your God am holy' (Lev. 19:2; *cf*. Matt. 5:48). Therefore, 'in the church, everyone whether belonging to the hierarchy, or being cared for by it, is called to holiness,

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[509] *cf*. *Evangelii gaudium*, no. 117.
[510] *cf*. A.M. Triacca, 'Lo Spirito Santo e la chiesa. Verso una nuova comprensione della chiesa come tempio dello Spirito Santo' in P. Rodríguez (ed.), *L'ecclesiologia 30 anni dopo la 'Lumen gentium': Popolo di Dio – corpo di Cristo – tempio dello Spirito Santo – sacramento – comunione* (Roma: Armando, 1995), pp. 131-2, 146-8; the original Spanish edition is: Rodríguez (ed.), *Eclesiologia 30 años después de 'Lumen gentium'* (Madrid: Rialph: 1994); *cf*. Rodríguez, 'Verso una comprensione cristologica e pneumatologica del popolo di Dio' in Rodríguez (ed.), *L'ecclesiologia 30 anni dopo*, pp. 174-6.
[511] *cf*. *Deus caritas est*, nos 1, 16.

according to the saying of the Apostle: "For this is the will of God, your sanctification"' (1 Thess. 4:3) [LG 39].

However, the human response of faith and love, characterized by holiness, is not possible without the grace of God. Hence, the sanctifying Spirit of God gives grace to the faithful to remain in the vertical communion, as they journey in hope and constant renewal towards the perfect eschatological communion: 'The church, to which we are all called in Christ Jesus, and in which we acquire *sanctity through the grace* of God, will attain its full perfection only in the glory of heaven, when there will come the time of the restoration of all things (*cf*. Acts 3:21)' [LG 48].

Thus, in line with 'some aspects' of *Communionis notio*, we have given the highest priority of 'church as communion' to the *vertical-invisible*; and we have related 'communion' to other ecclesiological expressions like, 'people of God', 'body of Christ' and 'temple of the Holy Spirit'.

4.2.2 Vertical-Visible Dimension

Next in the order of priority is what we have termed the *vertical-visible* dimension of 'church as communion'. It is vertical because it involves divine-human relationship; and it is visible because it entails human activity or gathering. The *vertical-visible* dimension refers to common participation of Christians in some spiritual goods.[512] For instance, in the *visible* assembly of Christians at worship – sharing in the spiritual goods of the gospel and

[512] Kasper, *La chiesa di Gesù Cristo*, pp. 36, 366. In this regard, Congar says that the church is a twofold mystery of communication and of communion: through the communication of the sacraments – that is, of the holy 'things' (*sancta*) – the church is a communion of the saints (*sancti*) [Congar, *Un popolo messianico: La chiesa, sacramento di salvezza. La salvezza e la liberazione* (Brescia: Queriniana, 1976), pp. 69-70]. We, however, observe that this articulation seems to overlook other aspects of the 'mystery of communication', namely the proclamation of the gospel, genuine witness of Christian life, etc. Kasper, for instance, mentions the communication of the gospel in addition to that of the sacrament. He says that communion is not realized 'from below', rather it is grace and gift, common participation in the unique truth, in the unique life and in the unique love that are communicated to us, through Jesus Christ, in the Holy Spirit, *through the word of God* and the sacrament (Kasper, *La chiesa di Gesù Cristo*, pp. 368-9).

sacraments – there is also a *vertical* communion with God. Without explicitly using the expression, 'vertical-visible dimension of communion', Vatican II affirms its existence through the celebration of the sacraments: in the church 'the life of Christ is poured into the believers who, through the sacraments, are united in a hidden and real way to Christ who suffered and was glorified' (LG 7). The council elaborates further on this: firstly, one is incorporated into the communion of the church through baptism (LG 7; *cf*. LG 11). Moreover, it is in the eucharist that communion with God and fellow Christians is most profoundly experienced: 'Really partaking of the body of the Lord in the breaking of the eucharistic bread, we are taken up into *communion with him and with one another*. "Because the bread is one, we though many, are one body, all of us who partake of the one bread" (1 Cor. 10:17). In this way all of us are made members of his body (*cf*. 1 Cor. 12:27), "but severally members one of another" (Rom. 12:5)' [LG 7].[513] 'Strengthened in Holy Communion by the body of Christ, they then manifest in a concrete way that unity of the people of God which is suitably signified and wondrously brought about by this most august sacrament' (LG 11; *cf.* LG 26).

John Paul II, therefore, rightly affirms that: 'It is not by chance that the term *communion* has become one of the names given to this sublime sacrament.' The eucharist, the culmination of all the sacraments, perfects 'our communion with God the Father by identification with his only-begotten Son through the working of the Holy Spirit.' This

[513] *Communionis notio* (no. 5) reiterates this point. Furthermore, Ratzinger, by considering 1 Cor. 10:16-17 as the place in Scripture where the word *koinōnia* (*communio*) is used for the first time, holds that one could deduce the whole communion ecclesiology from there. For, according to him, in this explanation of believers creating themselves an ecclesial communion, in the communion with the Lord, is expressed the universality as well as the locality, of the concrete church; the dynamism, the missionary self-transcendence is expressed, that is, the whole sense of living in the reciprocal love in a communication of self in the Lord is expressed (Ratzinger, 'Alcuni aspetti della chiesa', pp. 67-8).

sacrament, 'as the supreme sacramental manifestation of communion in the church… *creates communion and fosters communion*.'[514]

Consequently, this 'eucharistic ecclesiology' could illuminate the concepts of 'communion of saints' and the 'communion of churches'. Regarding the first concept, we agree with *Communionis notio* that 'the common visible sharing in the goods of salvation (*the holy things*), and especially in the eucharist, is the source of the invisible communion among the sharers (*the saints*) [CN 6]. Whereas the invisible part of the 'communion of saints' will be considered in the next subsection (4.2.3), the concept of the 'communion of churches' will be treated in subsection 4.4.5.

4.2.3 Horizontal-Invisible Dimension

The *horizontal-invisible* dimension refers to the invisible part of the 'communion of saints.' It is *horizontal* because it is composed of humans, and it is *invisible* because it is made up of the saints in heaven and departed souls in purgatory. These together with the community of faithful on earth form one church:

> Until the Lord shall come in his majesty … some of his *disciples are exiles on earth*, some *having died are purified*, and others are *in glory*…; but all in various ways and degrees are in *communion* in the same charity of God and neighbour and all sing the same hymn of glory to our God. For all who are in Christ, having his Spirit, form one church and cleave together in him (*cf*. Eph. 4:16) [LG 49].

Among the saints in glory Mary, the mother of Jesus Christ, is the model for the pilgrim church (LG 53, 54, 63, 65) and her eschatological pattern in glory (LG 68). Given to the church by the Lord himself, she is the mother in the communion of sisters and brothers (LG 53, 54) – a communion made possible through the Son of God who became incarnate in her womb (LG 52), and whose salvific paschal mystery she most intimately experienced (LG 57-58) and singularly merited from (LG 53). In glory, together with all

[514] John Paul II, Encyclical Letter, *Ecclesia de eucharistia*, 17 April 2003, nos. 34, 38, 40.

the saints, she intercedes for the pilgrim church (LG 60, 62, 66, 69).[515] In this way, two of the '*other* aspects' of *Communionis notio* have been highlighted: (a) the pilgrim-eschatological dialectic feature of the church (CN 3, 6); and (b) the important role of Mary in the church as communion (CN 6, 19).[516]

4.2.4 Horizontal-Visible Dimension

Finally, there is the *horizontal-visible* dimension of the church-communion. It is horizontal because it has to do with only humans and it is visible because entails the life, activities and organization of the community of the faithful on earth. Thus it deals with only one of the three 'phases' of the communion of saints. The *horizontal-visible* dimension is the least in order of priority in the whole mystery of the church as communion; and when this perspective of its secondary nature is lost on Christians there is always a distortion of the comprehension of the mystery of church and of salvation itself.

Because of its visible-human nature this dimension of the whole church as communion is more appropriately referred to as a 'community'. This community of all the faithful on earth has several sub-dimensions or aspects. In the first place, we have the categories of the clergy, the laity and the religious. Secondly, there is issue of the communion among the bishops and between them and the Bishop of Rome. Thirdly, there is the relationship between the one universal church and the numerous local churches. Fourthly, unity among all Christians or ecumenism is also an aspect of this dimension. These 'sub-dimensions' of the *horizontal-visible* communion have been considered in the course of harmonizing the primary model with the other models.

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[515] *cf. Evangelii gaudium*, nos 285-7.
[516] Doyle, *Communion Ecclesiology*, p. 129.

The *horizontal-visible* dimension of communion (with its further sub-dimensions) calls our attention to one of the 'some aspects' of *Communionis notio*: 'church as communion' should not be expressed in an anti-hierarchical manner (CN 4). Secondly, the *horizontal-visible* dimension caters for one of the '*other* aspects' of *Communionis notio*: in elaborating the transcendental nature of the church one should not overlook her concrete, historical and changing aspects (CN 3, 4).[517]

As it could be seen in the subsequent sections, the richness of the communion model of the church is not only in its multi-dimensionality but also in its capacity to have the other models incorporated into it for a more comprehensive articulation of the mystery of the church.

4.3 Communion and Discipleship Models

4.3.1 Church-Communion and Call to Discipleship

One of the 'other aspects' of *Communionis notio* indicates the importance of the personal union of each Christian with the triune God in the church understood as communion (CN 3).[518] This may be taken care of by harmonizing the communion model with discipleship model, which emphasizes the individual member's relationship with Christ and, through him, with the Holy Trinity.

To gather more men and women into communion with the triune God, the risen Jesus Christ commanded his apostles: 'Go, therefore, make *disciples* of all nations; baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit' (Matt. 28: 18-19). Thus, those invited into the vertical-invisible communion with the God are called to become *disciples* of Jesus Christ; that is, his followers on this earth. They are called to 'learn' to be

[517] Doyle, *Communion Ecclesiology*, p. 130.
[518] Doyle, *Communion Ecclesiology*, p. 129.

ultimately like Christ, whose body they have become. Constantly in union with Christ, their Head and Master, they are in communion with the triune God through the work of the Holy Spirit. At the same time, and because of the vertical-invisible communion, they form a community of disciples on this earth (the horizontal-visible communion mentioned above).

We share the thoughts of Raymond Brown that the emphasis on the discipleship of Christ can be found in the Johannine literature, whose ecclesiology 'is distinguished by its emphasis on *the relation of the individual Christian to Jesus Christ*.' In other words, there is an emphasis on the relationship between the sheep (believer) and shepherd (Christ) in John 10, between the branch (believer) and vine (Christ) in John 15.[519] This also indicates the christological foundation of the mystery of the church: 'For eternal life one must continue to follow the shepherd or adhere to the vine (John 10:27-28; 15:2-6). This is an ecclesiology peculiarly shaped by christology. Within the collective imagery of vine and flock, the core of the ecclesiology is a personal, ongoing relation to the life-giver come down from God.'[520]

Furthermore, this relationship to Jesus, Brown rightly discerns, 'outweighs in importance all distinctions flowing from special service in the church.' In this regard, 'one may contrast the Johannine imagery of the vine with the Pauline imagery of the body.' While in 1 Corinthians 12, Paul uses various members of the body to illustrate diverse charisms, 'John writes only about the vine (Jesus) and the branches (Christians). The Gospel shows no interest in diverse charisms that distinguish Christians: it is interested in a basic, life-receiving status enjoyed by all.' One could, therefore, deduce that discipleship

[519] R. Brown, *The Churches the Apostles Left Behind* (New York: Paulist, 1984), pp. 84-5; *cf*. R. Gaillardetz, *Ecclesiology for a Global Church: A People Called and Sent* (New York: Orbis, 2008), p. 27; *cf*. S.S. Smalley, 'The Johannine Community and the Letters of John' in M. Bockmuehl & M.B. Thompson (eds), *A Vision for the Church: Studies in Early Christian Ecclesiology in Honour of J.P.M. Sweet* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1997), p. 99.
[520] Brown, *The Churches the Apostles Left Behind*, p. 87.

rather than apostleship is 'what constitutes prime dignity in Johannine ecclesiology. The Fourth Gospel emphasizes *discipleship*, a status that all Christians enjoy; and within that status what confers dignity is the love of Jesus.'[521] By the use of the imageries of shepherd-sheep and vine-branches, then, John rightly stresses more on the vertical relationship with Christ than the horizontal relationships among church members.[522]

The church, made up of those called to communion with God and initiated into discipleship of Christ through the trinitarian seal of baptism, is not only christological in character, but pneumatological as well. John's Gospel hints at this when it recalls that Jesus speaks of baptism as being 'born of water and the Spirit' (John 3:5). In other words, entrance into eternal communion with the triune God (*cf*. John 3:3) is aided by the grace of the Paraclete-Spirit who dwells within every believer for all times (John 14:15-17).[523] Furthermore, the Holy Spirit is not only the source of our communion with the triune God but with fellow believers as well.[524]

In view of the common faith and baptism, and the one Lord to whom all the disciples relate in one Holy Spirit, this communion is based on equality among all members:

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[521] Brown, *The Churches the Apostles Left Behind*, pp. 90, 91.

[522] Gaillardetz, *Ecclesiology for a Global Church*, p. 27. Gabriele Cislaghi also reflects on the prologue of 1 John, identifying the vertical and horizontal dimensions of 'communion'. However, we observe that he, by following the sequence of the text of 1 Jn.1:3, considers the horizontal before the vertical dimension of the communion. In doing so he seems to give priority to the former dimension, not merely in his order of presentation but apparently in his thoughts; for he speaks of 'a communion which is *first and foremost horizontal*' [Cislaghi, 'La chiesa di sempre' in Cislaghi (ed.), *Perché la chiesa?: Un'introduzione all' ecclesiologia* (Milan: Ancora, 2009), pp. 22-3. However, as noted earlier on, in the explanations on the images of shepherd-sheep and vine-branches by Brown, the Fourth Gospel emphasizes the vertical over the horizontal communion. We are of the opinion that the same emphasis applies to 1 John, since it is the inner faith in God of believers (vertical communion) which precedes the coming together of the believers (horizontal communion), and not the other way round.

[523] Brown, *The Churches the Apostles Left Behind*, pp. 85, 107.

[524] *cf*. R. Scibona, 'Lo "Spirit" e la "chiesa" in IA. IIA. IIIA. Gv (Schizzo d' "ecclesiologia trinitaria" del gruppo di Gv)' in O.F. Piazza (ed.), *La Trinità e la chiesa: In dialogo con Giacomo Canobbio* (Cinisello Balsamo: San Paolo, 2006), pp. 111-5.

> Therefore, the chosen people of God is one: 'one Lord, one faith, one baptism' (Eph. 4:5); sharing a *common dignity* as members from their regeneration in Christ, having the same filial grace and the same vocation to perfection; possessing in common one salvation, one hope and one undivided charity.… And if by the will of Christ some are made teachers, pastors and dispensers of mysteries on behalf of others, yet all share a *true equality* with regard to the dignity and to the activity common to all the faithful for the building up of the body of Christ (LG 32).[525]

These features of common baptism, dignity and equality call for unity of purpose in the ministry of the church among all the faithful (clergy, laity and religious).[526] Again, the common baptism is the basis for the sharing in the priestly, prophetic and kingly functions of Christ by all the faithful, though in different degrees.[527] These functions have been elaborated on in the next section on 'communion and institutional models'. Here, we only wish to indicate an important biblico-patristic ecclesiological element that Vatican II has recovered due to the appreciation of the prophetic function of all members in the communion-discipleship ecclesiology. This element, called the *sensus fidelium*, means that

> The entire body of the faithful, anointed as they are by the Holy One (*cf.* 1 John 2:20, 27), cannot err in matters of belief. They manifest this special property by means of the whole peoples' supernatural discernment in matters of faith when 'from the bishops down to the last of the lay faithful'[528] they show universal agreement in matters of faith and morals. That discernment in matters of faith is aroused and sustained by the Spirit of truth (LG 12).

This calls for more involvement of the lay faithful in the process of study and reflection on matters of faith, as well as in their teaching or dissemination.[529]

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[525] *cf.* G. Colzani, 'Figura teolgica e compito missionario del laico: Da una prospettiva ecclesiologica ad una cristologica', *Studia Missionalia*, 49 (2000), p. 3.

[526] Women and men are equally disciples of Christ. This calls for a greater role of women (especially lay women) in the life and mission of the church. This is an issue that Pope Francis draws the church's attention to (*Evangelii gaudium*, nos 103-4). Created as complementary sexes in the image and likeness of the triune God, one could use the perichoresis of the three divine Persons to advance new and better ways of the reciprocal roles of men and women in ecclesial life and mission (Greshake, *Il Dio Unitrino*, p. 447). Perhaps the same principle could also be used to suggest better ways of fostering the mutual roles of the young and elderly in the church (*cf. Evangelii gaudium*, nos 105-8).

[527] *cf.* M. Kehl, *La chiesa: Trattato sistematico di ecclesiologia cattolica* (Cinisello Balsamo: San Paolo, 1995), pp. 98-102.

[528] Augustine, *De Praed. Sanct.* 14, 27: PL 44, 980.

[529] M. Semeraro, *Mistero*, *comunione e missione: Manuale di ecclesiologia* (Bologna: Dehoniane, 1996), pp. 216-8; *cf.* Kehl, *La chiesa*, pp. 380-2.

4.3.2 'Symbiosis' Between Communion and Discipleship Models

From what we have said so far, it might be evident that the harmonization of the models of communion and discipleship entails a 'symbiotic' relationship between them which might be mutually beneficial in correcting certain tendencies that some articulations of either model are prone to. The individualism that the discipleship model might be prone to due to an overemphasis on the personal relationship with Christ could be overcome by communal nature of the primary model. On the other hand, the impression found in some versions of the primary model that communion is mainly for personal gratification and support (*cf*. section 3.3) could be held in check by discipleship's stress on close relationship with Christ.

Finally, in such a harmonized understanding of the church as communion-discipleship, the demerits of clericalism could be overcome, while the laity would shed off their passivity. Joining hands with the clergy and the religious, the laity would be more involved in the life and mission of the whole church, under the inspiration and empowerment of the Holy Spirit.[530]

4.4 Communion and Institutional Models

4.4.1 Institution in Communion Ecclesiology

Is the institutional feature of the church a purely accidental element? Or has it a genuine theological meaning in the church understood as communion?[531] We hold, in line with Vatican II (*cf*. LG chapter 3), *Communionis notio*,[532] and Dulles' comprehension of the ecclesial institutional feature as a distinct model, that it is not a purely accidental element.

[530] *cf*. *Evangelii gaudium*, nos 40, 119-20.
[531] Kehl, *La chiesa*, p. 373.
[532] In subsection 2.5.5 we elaborated on *Communionis notio*'s stand that it is wrong to present the 'church as communion' in an anti-hierarchical manner.

This position is further clarified by Medard Kehl who rightly makes a distinction between the 'primary institutions' and 'secondary institutions' in the church. He says, the primary institutions, which inextricably belong to the church, include the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, the common Creed, the Tradition and the normative doctrinal teachings, the sacraments and other liturgical celebrations, the juridical order, the communitarian and ministerial structures. These primary institutions, we agree with Kehl, have theological meaning in the 'church as communion'.[533] They should, however, be distinguished from the 'secondary institutions' of administration and organization which often reinforce the formal-bureaucratic aspect of the church. The latter, Kehl rightly discerns, are only sociological 'means' required to achieve the end of the 'primary institutions'; and to the extent that they contribute to render more transparent the theological sense of the primary institutions, they also participate in the theological legitimacy of the latter.[534]

In the church understood as communion, however, both the primary and secondary institutions are subordinate to the ecclesial communion feature. By concurrently affirming the necessity of the institutional feature of the church and its secondary nature, one could avoid the anti-hierarchical tendency that *Communionis notio* cautions against, and at the same time place the models of communion (primary) and institution (secondary) in a right equilibrium.[535]

Thus, while on the one hand, the institutional feature of the church is upheld, on the other hand, the communion of each and all the faithful 'with the Father, through Christ in

[533] Kehl, *La chiesa*, p. 376; *cf.* A. Acerbi, *Due ecclesiologie: Ecclesiologia giuridica ed ecclesiologia di comunione nella 'Lumen gentium'* (Bologna: Dehoniane, 1975), pp. 72-8.
[534] Kehl, *La chiesa*, p. 376, footnote no. 4. The secondary institutions have sometimes been negatively shaped by historical circumstances and human weakness; and the failure to discern this and the more fundamental fact that such institutions are secondary in nature have often blurred the church self-understanding (*cf.* G. Canobbio, 'Introduzione' in K. Rahner, *La gerarchia nella chiesa: Commento al capitolo III di 'Lumen gentium',* ed. and introduced by G. Canobbio (Brescia: Morcelliana, 2008), pp.6-7.
[535] *cf. Communionis notio* no. 4; subsection 2.5.5; Kehl, *La chiesa*, pp. 373-6.

the Holy Spirit' takes precedence. Giovanni Vodopivec is, therefore, right in his affirmation that in view of the fundamental equal dignity of all the faithful, the communication of the divine life that transforms men and women into sons and daughters of God and constitutes them into the body of Christ, through baptism and the work of the Holy Spirit, is more important than any distinction or differentiation according to various hierarchical and social functions. Prior to any hierarchical organization is the communion of the sons and daughters of God, who on this earth form a community of disciples.[536] It is in this light that we consider the hierarchical structure of the church.

4.4.2 Collegiality and Hierarchical Communion

If the church is primarily communion in nature, it follows that the hierarchical structure should take the shape of her communal mould – the hierarchy should be collegial in character. Vatican II attempts to do this by placing the collegiality of the bishops on the firm foundation of the original collegial character of the 'twelve':[537] Jesus Christ 'willed and appointed twelve…. These apostles (*cf*. Luke 6:13) he constituted in the form of a college or permanent assembly, at the head of which he placed Peter, *chosen from among them* (*cf*. John 21:15-17)' [LG 19]. Here, Seamus Ryan rightly observes that Vatican II 'is careful to state that Peter, despite his prominent position of leadership, is also one of the twelve – *ex iisdem electus*. It is as head of the apostolic group, not apart from it, that Peter occupies his unique role.'[538]

The foundation for collegiality is further strengthened by Vatican II's definitive declaration that the 'consecration' of a new bishop is a sacramental ordination bestowing the apostolic gift of the Spirit. Bernard P. Prusak explains further: 'This statement means

[536] G. Vodopivec, 'La chiesa è comunione' in E. Ancilli (ed.), *La chiesa sacramento di comunione* (Roma: Teresianum, 1979), p. 219.
[537] S. Ryan, 'The Hierarchical Structure of the Church' in K. McNamara (ed.), *The Church: A Theological and Pastoral Commentary on the Constitution on the Church* (Dublin: Veritas, 1983), p. 165.
[538] Ryan, 'The Hierarchical Structure of the Church', pp. 166-7.

that the bishops receive their offices (functions or duties: *munera*) of sanctifying, teaching and governing through ordination, and not from the pope.' These functions are, however, exercised by the bishops 'only in *hierarchical communion* with the "head" and members of the college of bishops.'[539] Vatican II uses the innovative term 'hierarchical communion' to refer to the episcopal 'communion with the head and the members of the college' of bishops (LG 21, 22); and by implication it expresses the communion between the individual local churches and the universal church.[540]

Furthermore, in line with Vatican I, papal primacy is reaffirmed by Vatican II: 'The pope's power of primacy over all, both pastors and faithful, remains whole and intact. In virtue of his office, that is as Vicar of Christ and pastor of the whole Church, the Roman Pontiff has full, supreme and universal power over the Church' (LG 22). Therefore, it is only with its head that the college of bishops can exercise supreme power over the universal church. This it can do either when gathered in a solemn ecumenical council convoked by the pope, or when he calls the bishops living in all parts of the world to a collegiate action (LG 22). 'This collegial union is apparent also in the mutual relations of the individual bishops with particular churches and with the universal church. The Roman Pontiff, as the successor of Peter, is the perpetual and visible principle and foundation of unity of both the

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[539] B.P. Prusak, *The Church Unfinished: Ecclesiology Throughout the Centuries* (New York: Paulist, 2004), p. 285.

[540] Gianfranco Ghirlanda has done an in-depth work on the 'hierarchical communion' [Ghirlanda, *'Hierarchica communio': Significato della formula nella 'Lumen gentium'* (Roma: Gregoriana, 1980)]. On the one hand, we agree with him that: (1) the introduction of the adjective (hierarchical) in the formula 'hierarchical communion' is neither casual, nor awkward, nor due to a process of compromise in the conciliar debates (Ghirlanda, *'Hierarchica* communio', pp. 410-1); and (2) this formula was an attempt (as can be found in the *Nota explicativa praevia* no. 2) to harmonize the biblico-patristic mystery-communion perspective with the Trent-Vatican I perspective of institution (*cf*. Ghirlanda, *'Hierarchica* communio', pp. 411, 417-8, 427-8; *cf*. Kehl, *La Chiesa*, pp. 97-8). On the other hand, we do not share in his conclusion that this formula is the *key* of interpretation to the entire ecclesiology of *Lumen gentium*, and therefore of Vatican II: 'è anche la chiave di interpretazione di tutta l'ecclesiologia proposta dalla *Lumen gentium* e quindi dal Vaticano II' (Ghirlanda, *'Hierarchica* communio', p. 415; *cf*. pp. 3, 428). He arrives at this conclusion, because for him this formula captures well the two conciliar perspectives of communion and hierarchy. However, there are more than two conciliar ecclesiological perspectives (*cf*. section 1.1 and whole of chapter 3 of this study). Secondly, this formula expresses only an aspect of the *horizontal* dimension of communion (*cf.* LG 21-22), which is secondary to its *vertical* dimension; how then can the secondary aspect be considered the 'key' to the entire ecclesiology of Vatican II?

bishops and of the faithful', while individual bishops 'are the visible principle and foundation of unity in their particular churches' (LG 23). Therefore, the primacy of the pope, John Paul II rightly states, should be seen as a 'service of unity'; for like Peter the pope exercises his ministry, not apart from the college of bishops but as its member: 'the Bishop of Rome is a member of the "College", and the bishops are his brothers in the ministry.'[541]

In another sense, one could express the collaboration in ministries of the various ranks (bishops, priests and deacons) of the hierarchy as a 'collegiality'. Vatican II clarifies the three degrees of holy orders of deacons, priests and bishops – in the ascending order (LG 20, 28). In this manner the bishops are said to possess 'the fullness of the sacrament of orders' (LG 21). This notwithstanding, Vatican II holds that priests and deacons play indispensable roles in the ministry of the church, and they do so (in view of the ecclesial communion) in a collaborative way with their bishops (LG 20, 28-29).[542]

In short, then, though Vatican II has succeeded to some extent in placing the hierarchy in the right perspective of church as mystery of communion, some elements (e.g. strong centralism of ecclesial power) of the pre-conciliar juridical overemphasis seem to be apparent in its teaching.[543] This seems to be a challenge to a more fruitful post-conciliar theology of the identity and mission of the laity as a communion-based ecclesiology would warrant.

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[541] John Paul II, Encyclical Letter, *Ut unum sint*, 25 May 1995, nos 94, 95; *cf.* Greshake, *Il Dio Unitrino*, p. 483.

[542] Vatican II elaborates further on the teaching of the role of bishops in its *Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church, Christus Dominus*. On the detailed teaching of Vatican II on priests, one can refer to its two documents*: Decree on the Training of Priests, Optatam totius* and *Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests, Presbyterorum ordinis*. Vatican II also restores the married permanent diaconate (LG 29).

[543] Dulles, *Models of the Church* (1987), p. 35; Canobbio, 'Introduzione' in Rahner, *La gerarchia nell chiesa*, pp. 8-11; Kehl, *La chiesa*, pp. 97-68, 107-8.

4.4.3 Lay Participation and Ecclesial Leadership

Vatican II, we agree with Gianni Colzani, places the figure of the lay person in the ecclesiology of communion.[544] And an implication of perceiving the church primarily as communion, and therefore preceding any distinction among her members by the call of all to discipleship, is the increase in the participation of the lay faithful in the life and mission. John Paul II affirms this: 'only from inside the church's mystery of communion is the identity of the lay faithful made known and their fundamental dignity revealed. Only within the context of this dignity can their vocation and mission in the church and in the world be defined.'[545] The lay faithful fully belong 'to the church and its mystery'.[546]

Rightly seeing the laity as belonging 'to the church and its mystery', and ultimately to the mystery of Christ,[547] Vatican II describes the laity as the faithful who 'are by baptism made one body with Christ and are constituted among the people of God; they are in their own way made sharers in the priestly, prophetical, and kingly functions of Christ; and they carry out for their own part the mission of the whole Christian people in the church and in the world' (LG 31). William Henn sums up how the laity share in the threefold mission of Christ as priest, prophet and king:

> The *priesthood* of the lay person is expressed in his or her active participation in the liturgy, especially the eucharist, and in the offering of the sacrifice of work, prayer and apostolic endeavour in the consecration of the world to God. Participation in Christ's *prophetic office* places the lay person in relation with the word of God; it is the laity's right and duty to know and bear witness to this word in daily life. Lay people are called to exercise the *kingly function* of promoting the reign of God by the gift of themselves and by their service to justice and active charity.[548]

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[544] Colzani, 'Figura teolgica e compito missionario del laico', pp. 1-2.
[545] John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation, *Christifideles laici*, 30 December, 1988, no. 8.
[546] *Christifideles laici*, no. 9.
[547] Colzani refers to other conciliar texts (LG 34, 38) on the identity and mission of the laity that are also Christo-centric and holds that they offer a significant cue on lay identity and mission which has not yet been tapped. Secondly he thinks that Vatican II's *Decree on the Lay Apostolate*, *Apostolicam actuositatem*, 18 November 1965, no. 2 could be a good starting point for a theology on the mission of the laity (Colzani, 'Figura teolgica e compito missionario del laico', pp. 4-5).
[548] W. Henn, 'The Identity and Mission of the Laity from the Point of View of Ecclesiology', *Studia Missionalia*, 49 (2000), p. 102; *cf*. Colzani, 'Figura teolgica e compito missionario del laico', pp. 4, 13-9.

It is in the consecration of the world to God by the laity in the activities of their daily life and work that Vatican II sees what 'specifically characterizes' them (LG 31).[549] However it could be observed that this conciliar 'special' or 'secular' character of the laity is not really specific to them, for on the one hand, some priests and religious are engaged in temporal affairs by the nature of their apostolate or ministry; while on the other hand, some lay faithful are fully engaged in (parish) pastoral work in such a way that they are less involved in temporal affairs. We therefore share in the observation of Henn that there is still more to be done to attain a precise definition of the identity and mission of the laity.[550]

Furthermore, to what extent can the laity participate in ecclesial leadership, since the ecclesiology of communion does not in any way deny nor abolish the hierarchical feature of the church?[551] In the first place, in the church perceived primarily as communion, the hierarchical feature of the church does not become an 'instrument of dominance'[552], but that of *service*. In this vein, the three-fold functions are understood, not as the preserve of a spiritually higher class in relation to the laity, but as functions flowing, first and foremost, from the minister's participation in the life of God – a participation which is shared by all church members (*cf*. LG 2); and secondly then as service to a community of which he (minister) is part of and not above. The prior communion with God calls for the discipleship kind of ongoing intimate relationship of the minister with the Lord Jesus and his exercise of the functions of sanctifying through the sacraments (priestly), teaching (prophetic) and governing (kingly) should all be done in collaboration of the lay faithful

[549] *Christifideles laici*, no. 9; *cf*. Kloppenburg, *Ecclesiology of Vatican II*, p. 313.
[550] Henn, 'The Identity and Mission of the Laity', pp. 89-90; *cf*. *Christifideles laici*, no. 14. Colzani agrees with Henn on this point; moreover the former says that even *Christifideles laici*, could not achieve a precise definition of the laity. Nonetheless, he says, by presenting the church as mystery, communion and mission, *Christifideles laici*, recovers the three ecclesial characteristics of the dignity, participation and co-responsibility of the laity (Colzani, 'Figura teolgica e compito missionario del laico', p. 4).
[551] Vodopivec, 'La chiesa è comunione', p. 219.
[552] Kehl, *La chiesa*, p. 380.

with whom he forms a community.[553] In view of clergy-laity collaboration, Vatican II acknowledges the competence of the laity and the great contribution they can make towards the growth of the church: 'They are, by reason of the knowledge, competence or outstanding ability which they may enjoy, permitted and sometimes even obliged to express their opinion on those things which concern the good of the church' (LG 37). This calls for a change in attitude by the pastors; hence Vatican II teaches that:

> Let the spiritual shepherds recognize and promote the dignity as well as the responsibility of the laity in the church. Let them willingly employ their prudent advice. Let them confidently assign duties to them in the service of the church, allowing them freedom and room for action. Further, let them encourage lay people so that they may undertake tasks on their own initiative. Attentively in Christ, let them consider with fatherly love the projects, suggestions and desires proposed by the laity (LG 37).

4.4.4 Charisms and Institution

In the light of the ecclesiology of communion, the vocations, ministries, charisms and responsibilities of the laity and clergy (not forgetting that of the religious) could be seen as diverse and complementary at the same time. John Paul II affirms this: 'Ecclesial communion is more precisely likened to an "organic" communion, analogous to that of a living and functioning body. In fact, at one and the same time it is characterized by *diversity* and a *complementarity* of vocations and states of life, of ministries, of charisms and responsibility.'[554]

Furthermore, then, on the specific issue of the relationship between charisms and institution, a sound appreciation of the equilibrium between their diversity and

[553] Greshake uses the perichoresis of the Trinity to elucidate the reciprocal roles of the clergy, religious and laity: the church that is understood as communion, and in this way as an image of the triune God, is an event of mediation, in which the multiplicity of the diverse faithful (clergy, religious, laity) is brought together in unity, whereas the unity is realized in the plurality of the distinct states of the clergy, religious and laity. In this manner, the unity-communion of the church consists in the perichoresis of the distinct states, in the mutual recognition and participation in that which is proper to the clergy, religious or laity (Greshake, *Il Dio Unitrino*, pp. 448-9).

[554] *Christifideles laici*, no. 20.

complementarity could probably be advanced if it is well understood that they are both 'gifts' from the same source – the Holy Spirit:[555]

> It is not only through the sacraments and the ministries of the church that the Holy Spirit sanctifies and leads the people of God and enriches it with virtues, but, 'allotting his gifts to everyone according as he wills' (1 Cor. 12:11), he distributes special graces among the faithful of every rank. By these gifts he makes them fit and ready to undertake the various tasks and offices which contribute toward the renewal and building up of the church, according to the words of the Apostle: 'The manifestation of the Spirit is given to everyone for profit' (1 Cor. 12:7) [LG 12].

We, therefore, agree with Kehl that the lack of this pneumatological perspective has led many modern theologians to wrongly place charisms and institution in mutual opposition.[556] Vatican II, however, as evident in the above citation, seeks to bring a balance between institution and charisms (*cf.* LG 4, 12, 33, 35).[557]

Another way of comprehending the charisms-institution relationship is to perceive it in the light of the Trinitarian perichoresis, that is, the mutual indwelling of the three divine Persons.[558] Gisbert Greshake explains: to comprehend the church as communion implies perceiving in a 'perichorestic' manner both the charismatic and institutional poles. Both poles should mutually recognize and complete each other as moments of the one communal realty which is the church. That is, the institutional factor should test the charisms which arise from the inner dynamism of the Holy Spirit, to see if they are truly from God (*cf.* 1

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[555] *cf. Evangelii gaudium*, nos 130-1.
[556] Kehl, *La chiesa*, pp. 377-8.
[557] Vatican II saw some lively discussions on charisms. Albert Vanhoye rightly notes that in the wake of the council, some authors have revived the theory that the Pauline churches had a purely charismatic structure. However, his examination of the New Testament texts does not in any bear out this theory. Rather, he observes that no precise notion of charism yet existed in the New Testament, and such a concept was only being sketched out. Furthermore, he says that it is 'impossible to give a clear definition of the relationship between *charismata* and ministries, and between *charismata* and hierarchy on the basis of the New Testament texts. [However] we must neither confuse these different aspects of the reality of the church, nor separate them, still less place them in opposition to one another.' The New Testament, Vanhoye rightly concludes, offers some dynamic perspectives on charisms, which could be used as the starting point for a theological development of this concept [Vanhoye, 'The Biblical Question of "Charisms" After Vatican II' in R. Latourelle (ed.), *Vatican II: Assessment and Perspectives Twenty-Five Years After (1962-1987)*, vol. 1 (New York: Paulist, 1988), pp. 439-68, especially, 459-65].
[558] R.P. McBrien, *Catholicism* (San Francisco: Harper, 1994), p. 298.

John 4:1) and call them to order with force where they threaten to go beyond the 'institutions of Christ' (the word and sacrament), directing them towards mutual integration. On its part, the charismatic element which issues forth from the inner part should always revitalize the institutional pole.[559] Thus far we concur with Greshake. We, however, find confusing his statement that the institutions which are founded on the work of Christ are dead and they kill if they lack the vital breath of the Holy Spirit. This confusion could probably be avoided if Greshake makes a distinction between primary and secondary ecclesial institutions as Kehl does (*cf.* subsection 4.4.1). The primary institutions (e.g. the Scriptures and sacraments) can never be said to be lacking the vital breath of the Holy Spirit and therefore dead.

Underlying the tension between charisms and institutions is a more fundamental polarity, namely, that between particularity and generality.[560] The discernment of the right balance between the 'particularity' of the local churches and the 'generality' of the universal church is the subject of the next subsection on the 'communion of churches'.

4.4.5 Communion of Churches

As mentioned earlier on, the 'eucharistic ecclesiology' should help elucidate the communion among the churches (*cf.* subsection 4.2.2). Unfortunately, however, there are versions of the theology of the 'communion of churches' in which the 'eucharistic ecclesiology' is not soundly articulated. For instance, a version of the theology of the 'communion of churches' claims that because wherever the eucharist is celebrated, the totality of the mystery of the church is present, any other principle of unity or universality is

[559] Greshake, *Il Dio Unitrino*, pp. 445-6; J. Fuellenbach, *The Church: Community of the Kingdom* (New York: Orbis, 2002), pp. 122-3, 143; *cf.* Kehl, *La chiesa*, pp. 102-6.
[560] Greshake, *Il Dio Unitrino*, p. 446.

non-essential.[561] This view is skewed by the 'unilateral emphasis on the principle of the local church' (CN 11). *Communionis notio* notes further that

> Other conceptions, under different theological influences, present this particular view of the church in an even more radical form, going as far as to hold that gathering together in the name of Jesus (*cf*. Matt. 18:20) is the same as generating the church: the assembly which in the name of Christ becomes a community, would hold within itself the powers of the church, including power as regards the eucharist. The church, some say, would arise 'from base level' (CN 11).

Contrary to the above and other similar views, we believe that the unique Lord Jesus Christ willed, prayed for and has established through his incarnatio-paschal mystery one, holy and apostolic church, his one body, the one people of the triune God, brought into communion by the one Holy Spirit as his unique temple. And since the eucharist celebrates that one perfect sacrifice of the one Jesus Christ, the communion between the local churches and the universal church is rooted in it. Consequently, we agree with Ratzinger that the celebration of the eucharistic sacrifice in a particular or local community is not a celebration of that community alone. In the eucharistic celebration, the community becomes church in the reception of the entire sacramental gift of grace and the communion with the one and indivisible eucharistic body of Christ; this implies the unity and indivisibility of his mystical body which is the church (*cf*. CN 11).[562]

Therefore, on the one hand, in whatever locality the *authentic* eucharist takes place, the one (universal) church of Christ is truly present. On the other hand, in the true sense a local church cannot exist without the universal church. Thus, there is an interior reciprocity

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[561] A well-known Orthodox theologian who holds this view is N. Afanassieff, 'Una Sancta', *Irénikon*, 36 (1963), pp. 436-75, esp. pp. 452-4. However, other Orthodox theologians [e.g., J. Meyendorff, *Orthodoxy and Catholicity* (New York: Sheed &Ward, 1966), pp. 157-60; and J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion* (London: Longman, Darton &Todd, 1985), pp. 23-5, 132-3, 155-8] seek to correct the position of Afanassieff. Ironically, some Catholic liberation theologians [including L. Boff, *Ecclesiogenesis: The Base Communities Reinvent the Church* (New York: Orbis, 1986), esp. pp. 61-75] hold a view similar to that of Afanassieff (*cf*. Dulles, *Church and State*, p. 450).

[562] Ratzinger, 'Alcuni aspetti della chiesa', p. 67.

between the local church and universal church, which Vatican II expresses as follows: on the one hand, the particular or local churches are 'fashioned after the model of the universal church'; and on the other hand, 'in and from [the local] churches comes into being the one and only Catholic Church' (LG 23). This statement has, however, been interpreted variously, and associated with it is the issue of whether the universal church or the local church is prior to the other (*cf*. subsection 2.5.5).

Here, we do not wish to be engrossed in the ongoing debate on the above question of priority. Rather, we intend to briefly look at the mutual relationship between the universal church and the local church. Greshake's reflection on how the poles of particularity and of generality mutually relate to each other in a 'perichorestic' manner might be useful in this regard. He says that without the universal (catholic) dimension, the local (particular) church – lacking the external stimuli – folds into 'anemic' isolation. On the other hand, he continues, without the particular element the catholic life remains empty: the relational network becomes a mere structure of authority and power, a dead law, a depersonalizing union. Therefore, only in the indissoluble complex in which there is the simultaneous recognition and exchange of the particular element on the part of the general (universal) church, and of the general element on the part of the particular (local) church could there be a vital or dynamic communion.[563]

In the light of the above, we further concur with Greshake that the one church of God is concretely realized in the plurality of local churches, which are connected with one another in a dense network of relations. For this reason, the church is not a 'uniform entity' governed in a centralistic manner; it is rather a unity in and from plurality. She is structure-wise – as Vatican II says – a '*corpus ecclesiarum*' ('body of the churches') [LG 23], a '*communio ecclesiarum*' ('communion of churches'). Precisely in this way, says Greshake,

[563] Greshake, *Il Dio Unitrino*, p. 446.

the church reproduces (*riproduce*) the mystery of the Trinity.[564] His last statement might, however, need to be qualified. It might be better to speak of the church 'reflecting' the mystery of the Trinity, for the Trinity is a unique mystery that cannot be 'reproduced' in any way.

4.4.6 Ecumenism: Communion among All Christians

In the broader sense, the question of the 'communion of churches' includes ecumenism: the communion among churches is far from complete if the disunity among the Christian churches persists (*cf*. UR 1).[565] On the one hand, it is true that in a certain sense all Christians enjoy invisible unity. The basis for holding that there exists a certain unity among Christians is their common faith and baptism in the name of the triune God; for through one faith and one baptism (*cf*. UR 3), all Christians have been incorporated into communion with the triune God, the 'highest exemplar and source of' ecclesial unity (UR 2).

On the other hand, this communion is 'imperfect' (UR 3); and the 'wound' is more visible in cases where Christians of different churches cannot participate together in the eucharist, which signifies and constitutes 'communion' in the most unique way (*cf*. CN 17). This 'wound', which is palpable in the horizontal-visible communion of the church, calls for greater and authentic ecumenical efforts among all churches and individual Christians. In this regard, the teaching of Vatican II 'remains a powerful source of incentive and

[564] Greshake, *Il Dio Unitrino*, pp. 482, 485. Here Greshake cites the document of dialogue, 'Il mistero della chiesa', *Enchiridion Œcumenicum* 1, 1037, to support his position.

[565] The ecumenical dialogue is just one of several dialogues that the church is engaged in. In his first encyclical letter, published before the third session of Vatican II, Paul VI outlines four of these dialogues. He presents them in the form of concentric circles. The church's dialogue with the world (entire human race) is the outermost circle. Then in a descending order, this is followed by the circle of interreligious dialogue, the circle of ecumenical dialogue, and the *intra* ecclesial dialogue (among Catholics) as the innermost circle (Paul VI, Encyclical Letter, *Ecclesiam suam*, 6 August 1964, nos 97-115). In this chapter, interreligious dialogue and dialogue with the world have been treated in subsections 4.6.4 and 4.7.1 respectively.

orientation'[566] for the healing of the wound – restoring Christian unity. Thus, in contrast to the pre-conciliar posture of Christian unity simply meaning a return to the Roman Catholicism, Vatican II says that:

> This church, constituted and organized as a society in the present world, *subsists in* the Catholic Church, which is governed by the successor of Peter and by the bishops in communion with him. Nevertheless, many elements of sanctification and of truth are found outside its visible confines. Since these gifts belong to the church of Christ, they are forces impelling towards Catholic unity (LG 8).

A recent article of Angelo Maffeis, however, makes evident that there is no unanimous interpretation of the meaning of the statement that the church of Christ 'subsists in' the Catholic Church. Maffeis identifies three main positions: some theologians favour the sheer identity between the church of Christ and the Roman Catholic Church, while others speak of their non-exclusive identity, and still others present the idea of a historical existence of a meta-historical reality.[567] To avoid digressing far from the scope of this study, may it suffice to state that in the context of the LG 8, we agree with Francis A. Sullivan, Karim Schelkens and others who are proponents of the second position of non-exclusive identity.[568] In this light, Grillmeier was right in saying that the replacement of the verb 'is' in the initial schema with 'subsists in' is of 'supreme importance' to ecumenism.[569]

Furthermore, according to Vatican II the healing of the wound may be possible only if all – through a life of constant prayer, renewal and charity (UR 4, 7, 8) – are open to the *principle* of the church's unity, 'the Holy Spirit [who] dwelling in those who believe and

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[566] *Ut unum sint*, no. 49.

[567] A. Maffeis, 'Il dibattito sul significato della formula "subsistit in" (LG 8) tra esegesi testuale e interpretazione teologica', *Teologia*, 38 (2013), pp. 26-58. Maffeis gives an account of the ongoing debates on *subsistit in*, starting with the redactional stages of the formula, from the first draft to the final text of *Lumen gentium*. He then presents the theological interpretations of the textual evidence, with a critical evaluation of the arguments of the three main positions mentioned above.

[568] F.A. Sullivan, 'A Response to Karl Becker, S.J., on the Meaning of "Subsistit in"', *Theological Studies*, 67 (2006), pp, 396-402; Sulllivan, 'Further Thoughts on the Meaning of "Subsistit in"', *Theological Studies*, 71 (2010), p. 145; K. Schelkens, '*Lumen gentium*'s "Subsistit In" Revisited: The Catholic Church and Christian Unity After Vatican II', *Theological Studies*, 69 (2008), pp. 875, 890-1; *cf*. O. Tjørhom, 'An "Ecumenical Winter"? Challenges in Contemporary Catholic Ecumenism', *The Heythrop Journal,* 49 (2008), p. 843.

[569] A. Grillmeier, 'The Mystery of the Church', in H. Vorgrimler (ed.*), Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II*, vol. I (New York: Herder, 1967), p. 149.

pervading and ruling over the entire church… brings about the wonderful *communion* of the faithful and joins them together so intimately in Christ' (UR 2).[570]

4.4.7 'Symbiosis' of Communion and Institutional Models

From the above and the presentations of the strengths and weaknesses of the models of communion and institution in chapter three, one could sum up the symbiotic benefits which could be derived from synchronizing these models. Let us begin with the primary model. In place of the clericalism and lay passivity associated with the institutional model, the communion model advocates for increased participation of the lay faithful. Secondly, in place of an overemphasis on juridicalism which tends to reduce faith and love to laws and obligations, the primary model infuses a revival of spirituality and life of prayer rooted in the theological virtues. Thirdly, the communion model overcomes the obstacles to creative and fruitful theology and ecumenism that institutionalism creates. Fourthly, the communion model satisfies the human need of belonging which the other model lacks. On the other side of the symbiotic relationship, the consideration of institution as a distinct model could clarify the rapport between the invisible (spiritual) and the visible dimensions, which is not well distinguished in some presentations of communion ecclesiology. Secondly, by calling due attention to the human element of the church, the model of institution could help to avert the tendency, as noted by *Communionis notio*, to articulate communion ecclesiology in an anti-hierarchical way.

Finally, it is with such an understanding of church harmonized as communion-discipleship-institution that we wish to further incorporate the ecclesiological model of 'sacrament'.

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[570] John Paul II says the papacy itself should be 'opened' to new ways for arriving at Christian unity that the Spirit of God may indicate to us today (*Ut unum sint*, nos 95-6).

4.5 Communion and Sacrament Models

4.5.1 Church as Sacrament of Communion

Communionis notio is concerned about the fact that some versions of communion ecclesiology do not incorporate the understanding of the 'church as sacrament' in their elaborations (CN 4). Here, however, this is taken care of by harmonizing the models of communion and sacrament. In view of the invisible and visible dimensions of the ecclesial communion, the church could be perceived as a *sacrament of communion* (*cf.* LG 1). This is affirmed by Pedro Rodríguez who though considers the 'people of God'[571] as the guiding idea of ecclesiology. He states that, in the first place, the profound inner essence of the church is the 'communion' of humans with God and among humans:[572] the people of God is, in her most profound being, a mystery of communion; at the same time, the historical condition of this people is that of being, in the world and before the world, the 'sacrament' of this 'mysterious' communion. He continues: this expression indicates, on the one hand, (as sign) the 'structural moment' that assumes the mystery of communion in its earthly phase (*cf.* LG 8); and on the other hand, (as instrument), the way by which salvation in and through the church operates until the end, through Christ and in the Holy Spirit, God shall be all in all.[573]

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[571] We have argued in chapter one (subsection 1.5.4) why we hold that church-communion is the basic or primary model and that the theology of the church as 'people of God' is subsumed under the communion model.

[572] *cf.* J.-M. Tillard, *Church of Churches: The Ecclesiology of Communion* (Collegeville: Liturgical, 1992), p. 29; *cf.* J. López-Gay, 'Dimensione missiologica della comunione ecclesiale' in Capmany et al, *La chiesa mistero*, p. 42.

[573] Rodríguez says that there is the tendency in some post-conciliar ecclesiological articulations to contrast the theology of church-communion or church-sacrament with that of the 'people of God'. He notes that the theory of Dulles on 'models of the church', often not well understood, has had a great influence in this regard. Dulles, as we saw in the previous chapter, does not simply distinguish the various models, but sees them as complementary. On the one hand, in agreement with Dulles, Rodríguez sees the 'models' as complementary: he says that the models of church as 'communion' and 'sacrament' are of paramount importance in his ecclesiology of 'people of God'. On the other hand, he sees 'people of God' as the basic 'model' rather than subsumed under another model, as Dulles does (Rodríguez, 'Verso una considerazione cristologica e pneumatologica del popolo di Dio', pp. 149-50, 176-7).

Marcello Semeraro also links the communion and sacramental models of the church, giving priority to the former. He says that the sacramentality of the church is, first and foremost, in view of the intimate communion of the human person with God. To say this is to affirm that the church is in function of Christ, because in him God has encountered humanity in a definitive manner, rendering humans participants of the divine nature. To share in the divine life of the Son of God, who has assumed our human nature, this is grace; and the church is sign and instrument of this grace. Well understood, then, the church is not the grace, but that by which God signifies and produces it. And it is to the benefit of those who belong to her, but not to them alone, because God wills the communion with himself for all humans.[574] Therefore, until her eschatological fulfilment, the pilgrim church is the '"*universal sacrament* of salvation" [LG 48], simultaneously manifesting and exercising the mystery of God's love' which invites all into *communion* with him (GS 45).[575] In the light of this, Jésus López-Gay rightly states that the church is, one and at the same time, the project and visible realization of salvation, a project which is already initiated in her so that she gathers together men and women of 'every nation, race, tribe and language' (Rev. 7:9).[576] The act of gathering should, however, not be understood as being effected by the church herself, but by the Holy Spirit who uses her as an instrument of the grace of the incarnatio-paschal mystery of Christ (*cf*. LG 9).[577]

4.5.2 What Constitutes the Sacramentality of the Church?

In perceiving the church as sacrament, a question arises: in which aspect(s) of the church is the sacramentality of the church? Congar says it is in her whole life in her whole history, lived in the history of the world; it is for this reason that God has given us the

[574] Semeraro, *Mistero, comunione e missione*, pp. 232-3.
[575] *cf*. *Evangelii gaudium*, no. 112.
[576] López-Gay, 'Dimensione missiologica', p. 43.
[577] *cf*. Greshake, *Il Dio Unitrino*, pp. 465-7.

Holy Spirit who 'has spoken through the prophets'.[578] Similarly, for Semeraro, the church is the universal sacrament of salvation with her whole self: in the proclamation of the gospel, in the celebration of her sacraments, in her prayers, in her social life and in her ministers.[579] One could therefore agree with Dianich and Noceti that one of the weaknesses of the model of sacrament is the lack of a precise criteriology to distinguish the *ex opere operato* of the seven sacraments from the general sacramental character which qualifies the church in all her aspects of existence; this risks legitimatizing and considering essential any element of her empirical structure in the name of the always possible link with some element of her mystery of grace.[580]

4.5.3 'Symbiosis' of the Models of Communion and Sacrament

Whereas the communion model cannot provide for the 'precise criteriology' for sacramentality of the church, it mitigates the deficiency in the instrumental efficacy of the sacramental model, by allowing room for the explanation of the possibility for God's salvific action taking place beyond or outside the visible church. Secondly the interpersonal relationship or fellowship of the communion model could compensate for the 'impersonal ring'[581] associated with the church as sacrament. Thirdly, in some versions of the sacramental model, there is an excessive concern with the external aspects of the church and a corresponding neglect of her inner aspect. Hamer, observing this trend, indicated that the 'church as communion' takes care of this weakness in the former model.[582]

Furthermore, the fact that the model of communion is very much accepted in ecumenical dialogue seem to be facilitating the gradual acceptance of the model of

[578] Congar, *Un popolo messianico*, p. 91.
[579] Semeraro, *Mistero, comunione e missione*, p. 233.
[580] Dianich et al, *Trattato sulla chiesa*, p. 153.
[581] Dulles, *Models of the Church* (1987), p. 224; *cf*. section 3.4.
[582] J. Hamer, *The Church is Communion* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1964), pp. 87-91; *cf*. Dulles, *Models of the Church* (1987), p, 74.

sacrament in Protestant thought. For instance, in a 1998 Paper of the World Council of Churches, *The Nature and Purpose of the Church: A Stage on the Way to Common Statement*, some Protestants, beginning with the premise of the 'church as communion', accepted that the church could be referred to as 'the sign and instrument of God's design for the whole world. Being that part of humanity which already participates in the love and communion of God the church is a prophetic sign which points beyond itself to the purpose of all creation, the fulfilment of the kingdom of God' (no. 42).[583] Other ecumenical dialogues have even been more explicit in perceiving the church as a sacrament. Kasper attests to this: 'the dialogues speak of the church as an effective instrument of salvation, as a *sacrament of salvation*, a sacrament of the kingdom of God.'[584]

On the other side of the communion-sacrament 'symbiotic' relationship, the integrative character of the sacramental model could compensate for the often unclear articulation of the relationship between the invisible (spiritual) and visible dimensions of the church as communion. Finally, a harmonized understanding of the church as 'sacrament of communion', sign and instrument of the salvation, which brings men and women into communion with God, makes evident that the church does not exist for itself; it is missionary.[585] The next two sections, therefore, look at two importance ways (herald and servant models) by which the church accomplishes her mission.[586]

[583] WCC, Faith and Order, *The Nature and Purpose of the Church: A Stage on the Way to Common Statement*, Faith and Order Paper no. 181, Geneva: 1998. Though the term 'sacrament' is not used in the main text of the document, it appears in the notes where reasons are given as to why it was not a commonly acceptable concept at that time.
[584] W. Kasper, *Harvesting the Fruits: Basic Aspects of Christian Faith in Ecumenical Dialogue* (London: Continuum, 2009), p. 66.
[585] *cf*. Paul VI, Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii nuntiandi*, 8 December 1975, no. 15; *cf*. Kasper, *Chiesa Cattolica*, p. 462; López-Gay, 'Dimensione missiologica', p. 43.
[586] *cf*. Semeraro, *Mistero, comunione e missione*, pp. 229-35.

4.6 Communion and Herald Models

4.6.1 Church-Communion is Missionary by Nature

The herald model of the church is part of the broader mission of the church; and so we wish to begin our consideration of the complementarity between the communion and herald models by looking at how the primary model is connected with the general mission of the church.[587] There is a reciprocal relationship between the 'communion' and 'mission' of the church.[588] John Paul II attests eloquently to this:

> Communion and mission are profoundly connected with each other, they interpenetrate and mutually imply each other to the point that *communion represents both the source and the fruit of mission: communion gives rise to mission and mission is accomplished in communion.* It is always the one and the same Spirit who calls together and unifies the church and sends her to preach the gospel 'to the ends of the earth' (Acts 1:8). On her part the church knows that the communion received by her as a gift is destined for all people.[589]

Destined for all peoples, therefore, the church as communion is opened to the world in order that – until the end of time – many more souls may be drawn into communion with the triune God.[590] The church is, thus, '*missionary by her very nature,* since it is from the mission of the Son and the mission of the Holy Spirit that she draws her origin, in accordance with the decree of God the Father' (AG 2).[591] In other words, as a communion originating from the gratuitous love of God, characterized by the divine trinitarian communion and patterned on it, the church is open to a missionary expansion that is also

[587] Colzani observes that fifty years since Vatican II, there is still no organic and definitive reflection on the missionary conception of the council [Colzani, 'A 50 anni dal Vaticano II: Nuove prospettive per una teologia della missione', *Ad Gentes* 16 (2012), p. 25].
[588] *cf.* P. Cavallo, 'Alcune acquisizione e prospettive' in Capmany et al*, La chiesa mistero*, pp. 195-6; *cf.* N.J. Ormerod, '"The Times They Are A-Changin": A Response to O'Malley and Schloesser' in D.G. Schultenover (ed.), *Vatican II: Did Anything Happen?*, pp. 175-6.
[589] *Christifideles laici*, no. 32.
[590] Pasquale Cavallo speaks of communion as the goal (finality) of the church's mission (Cavallo, 'Alcune acquisizione e prospettive', p. 195).
[591] *cf.* John Paul II, Encyclical Letter, *Redemptoris missio*, 7 December 1990, nos 32, 40.

trinitarian in character.[592] Explaining the mission of the church in the light of her trinitarian dimension, together with her christological and pneumatological dimensions is one of the novelties of or recoveries by Vatican II.[593]

4.6.2 The Proclamation of the Word

It is true that the whole life of the church should function as a herald; however, in order to maintain the herald model as a distinct model and to avoid undue overlapping with other models, Dulles limits it to the missionary task of the proclamation of the gospel. This notwithstanding, Dulles' position could be enhanced by explicating that the act of proclamation is by both word and deed. The former is being considered in this subsection, while the subsequent subsection (4.6.3) takes up the proclamation by deed (witnessing).

Vatican II stresses the great importance and indispensability of the proclamation of the gospel, exhorting the church to make its own the sentiments of Paul:

> Wherefore she makes the words of the Apostle her own: 'Woe to me, if I do not preach the gospel' (1 Cor. 9:16), and continues unceasingly to send *heralds* of the gospel until such time as the infant churches are fully established and can themselves continue the work of evangelizing. For the church is compelled by the Holy Spirit to do her part that God's plan may be fully realized, whereby he has constituted Christ as the source of salvation for the whole world. By the *proclamation* of the gospel she prepares her hearers to receive and profess the faith. She gives them the dispositions necessary for baptism… and incorporates them in Christ (LG 17).

The close connection between the proclamation of the word and incorporation into the body of Christ (church-communion) is very evident in the prologue of 1 John (*cf*. subsection 2.5.4a).[594]

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[592] *cf*. B. Forte, 'La comunione particolare ed universale a servizio della missione' in J. Capmany et al, *La chesa mistero*, p. 79.

[593] Kasper, *Chiesa Cattolica*, pp. 465-6; *cf*. Greshake, *Il Dio Unitrino*, pp. 456-7; *cf*. Y. Congar, 'Principi dottrinali' in J. Schütte (ed.), *Il destino delle missioni: Il successo o il fallimento delle missioni dipende dal loro radicale ripensamento* (Roma-Brescia: Morcelliana, 1969), p. 152; M. Menin, 'Concilio Vaticano II: Aurora di una nuova missione', *Ad Gentes* 16 (2012), p. 3; S. Noceti, 'Introduzione: Con Ad gentes, oltre Ad gentes', *Ad Gentes* 16 (2012), p. 9.

Taking her own origin from the proclamation of Christ and the apostles, the church in turn has, according to Pope Paul VI, 'the essential mission… to evangelize all men' and women (EN 15).[595] Indeed, 'evangelization is the special grace and vocation of the church. It is her essential function. *The church exists to preach the gospel*' (EN 14).[596] The preaching or proclamation of the word of God is a major 'constitutive element' of evangelization (EN 17), for 'there can be no evangelization if the name, the teaching, the life, the promises, the kingdom and the mystery of Jesus Christ, the Son of God are not proclaimed' (EN 22, 42).[597]

Jesus Christ has entrusted the task of proclaiming the gospel to the whole church-communion and not to just her leadership. Pope Francis affirms this: 'Each Christian and every community must discern the path that the Lord points out, but all of us are asked to obey his call to go forth from our own comfort zone in order to reach all the "peripheries" in need of the light of the Gospel.'[598] The harmonization of the two models of communion and herald, therefore, calls for more involvement of the lay faithful in this task of proclamation.[599] In the Catholic Church there is still a lot to be done to encourage the lay faithful and to train them adequately for this task. Some suggestions have been made in this regard (*cf*. subsection 7.3.2c); but for now, we wish to indicate our agreement with Fuellenbach that the interplay between the models of communion and herald is manifested in a concrete pastoral way in the Basic Ecclesial Communities: 'The theology of the word of God has become central in the ecclesiological outlook of the Basic Ecclesial

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[594] Dianich, *La chiesa mistero di comunione*, pp. 7, 46-7; *cf*. Dianich et al, *Trattato sulla chiesa*, p. 241; *cf*. A. Shorter, 'Evangelization and Culture', *AFER*, 37 (1995), p. 101.
[595] Paul VI's *Evangelii nuntiandi* has been abbreviated as 'EN'.
[596] John Paul II says that the proclamation of the gospel 'is the permanent priority' of the church's missionary task (*Redemptoris missio*, no. 44, 63). Pope Francis reiterates this point (*Evangelii gaudium*, nos 111-2).
[597] *cf*. Forte, 'La comunione particolare ed universale', p. 99. For the effective proclamation of the word of God, the good news has to be contextualized. In Africa, the primary ecclesiological model of communion is being *contextualized* as 'family of God' (*cf*. chapters six and seven).
[598] *Evangelii gaudium*, nos 20, 118-31; *cf*. Shorter, 'Evangelization and Culture', pp. 96-7; *cf*. R. Kimaryo, 'Religious as Agents of Evangelization', *AFER*, 37 (1995), pp. 117-8.
[599] *cf*. Kasper, *Chiesa Cattolica,* p.469.

Communities (BECs). The word here has become the immediate point of reference and the source of inspiration. It is the primary catalyst of the community, since the word, unlike the sacraments, is always within reach.'[600]

4.6.3 Heralds as Witnesses

The proclamation of the gospel is more credible to its audience when the deeds or lifestyles of the heralds are in harmony with their message. It is in this vein that in exhorting the church about her evangelizing mission, Paul VI writes: '"Modern man listens more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, and if he does listen to teachers, it is because they are witnesses."[601] St. Peter expressed this well when he held up the example of a reverent and chaste life that wins over even without a word those who refuse to obey the word [*cf*. 1 Pet. 3:1]' (EN 41). After reiterating the above point of his predecessor, John Paul II explains further:

> The first form of witness is *the very life of the missionary, of the Christian family*, and *of the ecclesial community*, which reveal a new way of living. The missionary who, despite all his or her human limitations and defects, lives a simple life, taking Christ as the model, is a sign of God and of transcendent realities. But everyone in the church, striving to imitate the Divine Master, can and must bear this kind of witness; in many cases it is the only possible way of being a missionary.[602]

In reality such witnessing includes works of mercy to the poor and needy. However, in line delineating distinct models, Dulles reserves this sort of witnessing to the servant model.

4.6.4 Church-Communion: Proclamation and Interreligious Dialogue

The heralding of the good news of salvation to bring people into communion with God entails dialogue with non-Christians. In this regard, Vatican II considers four main

[600] Fuellenbach, *The* Church, p. 162.
[601] Paul VI, 'Address to the Members of the *Consilium de Laicis*', 2 October 1974, AAS 66 (1974), p. 568.
[602] *Redemptoris missio*, no. 42.

groupings of non-Christians with whom to dialogue:[603] two of these groupings are monotheistic (Judaism and Islam), the third polytheistic (without the exclusion of belief in the Divine Creator), and the fourth are those who have not yet arrived at an explicit knowledge of God (*cf*. LG 16).[604] For Vatican II, some 'good or truth' can be found in these groups of non-Christians; but whatever good or truth is found is 'a preparation for the Gospel' (LG 16). All the various 'religions' are, therefore, seen as forming a disposition for salvific *communion* in Christ. So while dialogue should be encouraged with non-Christians, the missionary mandate to proclaim the good news of Christ is and will still be valid until the end of time (LG 16-17).[605]

4.6.5 'Symbiosis' of the Models of Communion and Herald

We have seen how the models of communion and herald are profoundly and reciprocally connected to each other. Here, we wish to only indicate a few mutual 'benefits' of their 'symbiotic' relationship. The herald model, according to Dulles, tends to overlook the incarnational aspect of revelation (*cf*. section 3.5); and this is compensated for when in the articulation of the communion ecclesiology, the visible (human) dimension is well accounted for. Secondly, the communion (together with the institutional) model, by elaborating a balanced theology of 'communion of churches' (*cf*. subsection 4.4.5), could

[603] In *Ecclesiam suam*'s four concentric circles of dialogues, Paul VI classifies the above mentioned four groupings into two circles: those who do not explicitly profess faith in God belong to the outermost circle; and the others (Judaism, Islam and polytheistic Afro-Asiatic religions) belong to the circle of interreligious dialogue (*Ecclesiam suam*, nos 96-108). Both *Ecclesiam suam* (no. 107) and Vatican II (LG 16) give a pride of place to dialogue with the Jews.

[604] *Evangelii gaudium*, nos 247-52; G. Canobbio, *Chiesa religioni salvezza: Il Vaticano II e la sua ricezione* (Brescia: Morcelliana, 2007), pp. 27-8; Grillmeier, 'The People of God' in Vorgrimler (ed.), *Commentary on the documents of Vatican II*, p. 182; *cf.* J.A. de Silva, 'Karl Rahner's Theology: Its Influence on the Church's Attitude', *AFER*, 39 (1997), pp. 96-103,114-6.

[605] Vatican II's *Declaration on the Relationship of the Church to Non-Christian Religions, Nostra aetate* clearly affirms that Christ is and remains the unique way of salvation [*Nostra aetate*, 28 October 1965, nos 1-2; *cf*. *Redemptoris missio*, nos 17, 55-7; *cf*. Canobbio, *Chiesa religioni salvezza*, pp. 29-31; *cf*. Grillmeier, 'The People of God', p.184; *cf*. B. Hearne, 'Mission, Ecumenism and Fundamentalism', *AFER*, 37 (1995), pp. 111-2; *cf*. E. Boos, 'Evangelization Through Dialogue and Inculturation', *AFER*, 40 (1998), pp. 69-70].

compensate for the tendency of the herald model to present the church as a series of disconnected local churches (*cf*. section 3.5).

On the other side of the 'symbiotic' relationship, the merit of a clear sense of identity and mission of the herald model (*cf*. section 3.5) could compensate for the lack of this in some versions of the communion model (*cf*. section 3.3).[606] Finally, there is the tendency in the communion model to divinize the church beyond its due (*cf*. section 3.3); and this could be compensated for by the herald model in which spirituality is focused on the sovereignty of God (*cf*. section 3.5).

4.7 Models of Communion and Servant

4.7.1 Social Mission of the Church

Two of the 'other aspects' of *Communionis notio*, according to Doyle, are: (a) the inner unity of the church should not be considered completely apart from the larger human solidarity; and (b) the journey of the church towards the eschaton should not be dissociated from the current social concerns of human beings.[607] These concerns might be taken care of when the communion model is harmonized with the servant model which focuses on the social services, prophetic criticism of society, as well as on 'prophetic witnessing',[608] whereby the leadership and lay members of the church live up to the socio-moral standards she preaches to the world.[609]

Salvation in Jesus Christ, we agree with Semeraro, has both vertical and horizontal dimensions; and so though the mission which the Lord has entrusted to the church is

[606] *cf*. Shorter, 'Evangelization and Culture', p. 103.
[607] Doyle, *Communion Ecclesiology*, pp. 129-30.
[608] Dulles seems to omit the aspect of 'prophetic witnessing' in his servant model.
[609] *cf*. A.U. Nebechukwu, 'The Church's Prophetic Mission in Africa', *AFER*, 33 (1991), 264-79.

primarily soteriological, it does not exclude human promotion.[610] *Gaudium et spes* affirms this:

> In pursuing its own salvific purpose not only does the church communicate divine life to men [and women] but in a certain sense it casts the reflected light of that divine life over all the earth, notably in the way it heals and elevates the dignity of the human person, in a way it consolidates society, and endows the daily activity of men [and women] with the deeper sense and meaning. The church, then, believes it can contribute much to humanizing the family of man[kind] and its history through each of its members and its community as a whole (GS 40).

Anticipating *Gaudium et spes*, Paul VI's *Ecclesiam suam* highlighted this need for the church to dialogue with the world.[611] Perceiving dialogue in the light of God's self-communication for the salvation of mankind, *Ecclesiam suam* defined the church's dialogue with the world as the 'internal drive of charity which seeks expression in the external gift of charity'.[612]

However, Vatican II is more explicit than *Ecclesiam suam* in presenting another innovation in Catholic ecclesiology. That is, the relationship between the church and the world entails mutual benefits.[613] And as regards how the church benefits from the world,

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[610] Semeraro, *Mistero, comunione e missione,* p. 238. It should be noted that some theologians overemphasize the social mission of the church. For instance, T. Howland Sanks holds that it is not enough to simply acknowledge that the church has a social mission; rather, he says, 'the church *is* a social mission' [Sanks, 'Globalization and the Church's Social Mission', *Theological Studies,* 60 (1999), p. 626; *cf*. G. Mannion, 'Ecclesiology and Postmodernity: A New Paradigm for the Roman Catholic Church?' *New Blackfriars*, 85 (2004), pp. 317-8]. Contrary to Sanks' position but in agreement with Semeraro's, we are of the opinion that, keeping in mind the priority of the vertical-eschatological nature of the church, her social mission is secondary and so it would be an exaggeration to say that 'the church *is* a social mission.' It is more in keeping with Vatican II to say that the church *has* a social mission. Besides the references we have made to *Gaudium et spes*, our position is supported by Paul VI's *Evangelii nuntiandi*: 'Evangelization will also always contain - as the foundation, centre, and at the same time, summit of its dynamism - a clear proclamation that, in Jesus Christ, the Son of God made man, who died and rose from the dead, salvation is offered to all men, as a gift of God's grace and mercy. And not an immanent salvation, meeting material or even spiritual needs, restricted to the framework of temporal existence and completely identified with temporal desires, hopes, affairs and struggles…' (EN 27).

[611] Social dialogue with the world was an innovation in Catholic ecclesiology (*cf*. Prusak, *The Church Unfinished*, p. 313; *cf*. McBrien, *Catholicism*, p. 672).

[612] *Ecclesiam suam*, nos 64, 70-7.

[613] Insightful as God's dialogue with mankind is to articulating the church's dialogue with the world, it has the limitation of not being able to elucidate how the church benefits from the world; for God cannot be said to benefit from mankind. Probably this explains why *Ecclesiam suam* is less explicit on how the church benefits from the world.

the council says:[614] 'there is a considerable and varied help that it [the church] can receive from the world in preparing the ground for the gospel, both from individuals and from the society as a whole, by their talents and activity' (GS 40). We, therefore, concur with John D. Dadosky that, in her relationship with the world, the church is not only a teacher but also a learner. Her learning involves 'listening, dialogue, preparation, careful study and reflection.' He adds 'that it is not unusual that a teacher would spend much more time in preparation than actually teaching.'[615]

What then is the goal of the mutual relationship between the church and the world? Vatican II responds as follows: 'Whether it aids the world or whether it benefits from it, the church has but one purpose – that the kingdom of God may come and the salvation of the human race may be accomplished (GS 45).[616] However, far from the expectancy of the kingdom of God 'diminishing our concern to develop this earth… [it] should spur us on, for it is here that the body of a new human family grows, foreshadowing in some way the age which is to come' (GS 39). In other words, Christians 'have much to contribute to the prosperity of mankind and to world peace' (GS 72). This notwithstanding and in view of arriving at the ultimate *communion* with God, 'we must be careful to distinguish earthly progress clearly from the increase of the kingdom of Christ, such progress is of vital concern to the kingdom of God, in so far as it can contribute to the better ordering of human society' (GS 39).[617]

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[614] *cf*. J.D. Dadosky, '*Circumdata varietate*: The Multiple Dimensions of the Church towards an Explanatory Account', *New Blackfriars*, 91 (2010), p. 284; *cf*. A. Carroll, 'Church and Culture: Protestant and Catholic Modernities', *New Blackfriars,* 90 (2009), p. 166.
[615] Dadosky, 'Towards a Fundamental Theological Re-Interpretation of Vatican II', *The Heythrop Journal*, 49 (2008), p. 745.
[616] Prusak, *The Church Unfinished*, p. 320.
[617] *cf*. Prusak, *The Church Unfinished*, pp. 318, 320.

4.7.2 Link between the Models of Communion and Servant

Fundamental to the idea of communion is interaction or dialogue with the other which often brings mutual benefits. The communion model of the church has, therefore, a natural link with servant model, which is the church's 'social dialogue' with the world. Besides, we saw earlier on that there is a close relationship between church-communion and the ecclesial mission in general. Consequently, the social aspect of the church's mission is also connected with the communion model. A statement of John Paul II about evangelization links together the communion model and the two models of herald and servant: 'In both accepting and *proclaiming the gospel* in the power of the Spirit, the church becomes at one and the same time an "evangelizing and evangelized *community*", and for this very reason she is made the *servant* of all. In her the lay faithful participate in the mission of *service* to the person and society.'[618] In his turn, Ángel Antón, reflecting on the ecclesial life and teaching in the Third World, makes a clearer affirmation on the link between the communion and servant models:

> In the post-conciliar period, the churches of the Third World reflected upon this ecclesiological model of communion in a truly autonomous and original fashion from their state of oppression and dependence. The ecclesiological model emanating from this spontaneous reflection of faith… is centred in an ecclesiology of communion revolving around the poor and oppressed of the world.[619]

This 'service' to the poor, oppressed and society in general seems to be focused only on the provision of social services and prophetic criticism of socio-political structures and leadership. There is much more to be done as far as the 'prophetic witnessing' by the lifestyle of all the faithful, especially of the clergy, is concerned (*cf*. subsection 6.2.6).

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[618] *Christifideles laici*, no. 36.
[619] Á. Antón, 'Post-conciliar Ecclesiology: Expectations, Results, and Prospects for the Future' in Latourelle (ed.), *Vatican II: Assessment and Perspectives*, p. 419.

4.7.3 ‘Symbiosis’ of Communion and Servant Models

As in the case of the complementarity of the communion and the previous models, there is a ‘symbiotic’ relationship between the primary model and the servant model. On the one hand, the communion model may compensate for the weaknesses of the servant model as follows: first, where there is the tendency to overemphasize the social mission of the church (as Sanks seems to do),[620] the primary model could restore the proper orientation by giving priority to the vertical dimension of the church. Secondly, where the servant model does not clearly articulate the church-kingdom of God relationship, the eschatological perspective of the communion model compensates for. And thirdly, related to the preceding points, where the servant model overemphasizes justice, peace and prosperity in this world, once again the communion ecclesiology could bring in the due weight of the primacy of the eschatological perspective of the church. In this respect, Paul VI rightly states that the main goal of the church is not ‘restricted to the framework of temporal existence and completely identified with temporal desires, hopes, affairs and struggles, but a salvation which exceeds all these limits in order to reach fulfilment in a *communion* with the one and only divine Absolute: a transcendent and eschatological salvation, which indeed has its beginning in this life but which is fulfilled in eternity’ (EN 27).

On the other side of the ‘symbiotic’ relationship, the servant model could also compensate for some weaknesses in the primary model of communion. Firstly, by calling attention to the church’s mission in the world, the servant model could compensate for the tendency in some versions of communion ecclesiology to divinize the church beyond its due (*cf*. section 3.3). Finally, in some versions of communion ecclesiology there is no clear sense of mission (*cf*. section 3.3); this could be partly compensated for by the social mission

[620] *cf*. footnote no. 610 (subsection 4.7.1).

which makes the church relevant to the world, as well as by the servant model's emphasis on the church's prophetic role of social criticisms.

4.8 Conclusion

Taking Vatican II's 'mosaic' ecclesiology as our indispensable frame of reference and adopting and honing the multi-models theological tool of Dulles, we have attempted to articulate a communion-based multi-models ecclesiology. Into Dulles' method of the harmonization of the six models of communion, discipleship, institution, sacrament, herald and servant, we have introduced the idea of *symbiosis*. This idea takes cognizance of the fact no single model, not even the primary model of communion, is perfect; and it is helpful in addressing some weaknesses in the primary model (something which is apparently missing in Dulles presentation).

Another idea introduced into this work is *synergy*: the mystery of the church is greater than the summation of all its *salient features*. The salient features which the models illuminate include the following: the church could be comprehended, *first of all, as a communion* of humans with God, through Christ and in the Holy Spirit (communion model). This communion is realized on earth, by the work of the same Spirit, as the community (visible communion) of the disciples of Christ (discipleship model), incorporated into his body through faith and baptism. Among the disciples, Christ calls some to the ordained ministry of teaching, sanctifying and shepherding (institutional model) for the nurturing and growth of the community – and ultimately the expansion of the invisible communion. Not an end in itself, therefore, the whole visible community is a sign and an instrument of God's grace of salvation (sacramental model) to assemble into communion with the Holy Trinity all who respond by faith and charity. Furthermore, through the proclamation of the gospel of Christ by word and deeds (herald model), as well

as, by service to humanity (servant model), the visible community disposes human hearts and minds to this faith-charity response.

Our approach has enabled us to address some of the concerns of *Communionis notio*. Though we attempted to address both *Communionis notio*'s 'some aspects' and 'other aspects' (Doyle) of the church understood as communion, here we wish to highlight only the former aspects that dealt with the correction of errors. Firstly, the complementary use of several models addresses the need to integrate into the communion ecclesiology, the theologies of the church as 'people of God', 'body of Christ', sacrament, etc. Secondly, by presenting various dimensions of the 'church as communion', and giving due priority to the vertical dimension, we have attempted to avoid the tendency to overemphasize the horizontal dimension of communion, sometimes to the neglect of its vertical dimension. On the other hand, thirdly, by considering 'institution' as a *distinct* model we have tried to escape the trend to use 'communion' in an anti-hierarchical sense. Fourthly, though we have not found a definitive solution to the exact relationship between the universal church and local churches, our position of an interior reciprocity between the two avoids the tendency to overemphasize the local church in a unilateral manner, with the universal church appearing as a product of the federation of particular churches. Fifthly, in our presentation on the 'communion of churches', we have tried to overcome the trend in a version of eucharistic ecclesiology which sees the local community or church as autonomous.

The above illuminated mosaic portrait of the mystery of the church, with the dominant feature of communion is the basis for examining the reception of the ecclesiology of Vatican II by the Catholic Church in Africa and Ghana in particular (chapter six), and for projecting some prospects for the local church (chapter seven).

PART THREE: THE RECEPTION OF THE CONCILIAR ECCLESIOLOGY IN AFRICAN THEOLOGY AND PRAXIS: SOME PROSPECTS FOR THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN GHANA

Part three consists of chapters five, six and seven. The fifth chapter presents the *Akan* (Ghanaian) perspective of the traditional African concept of family – the matrix for the contextualization of the communion model as church-*family of God*. Chapter six, in turn, looks at the reception of the model church-*family of God* in African theology and praxis, with particular consideration of the situation in the Catholic Church in Ghana. Then, in the chapter seven, there is a consideration of some theoretical and practical prospects of a communion-based ecclesiology for the Catholic Church in Ghana.

CHAPTER FIVE: TRADITIONAL AFRICAN CONCEPT OF FAMILY: THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE AKAN OF GHANA

5.1 Introduction

There are efforts in the Catholic Church in Africa to contextualize the conciliar primary ecclesiological model of communion as 'family of God' (*cf*. sections 6.1-6.2). This chapter, therefore, seeks to articulate a traditional African concept of family (the matrix for the contextualization of the communion model). There are a variety of cultures in Africa, and even within a country one finds several cultures.[621] However, there are some common elements among these cultures.[622] Our presentation is, therefore, a Ghanaian perspective of the traditional concept of family. And even in this regard, we are focusing mainly on one of the several cultures in Ghana – namely the *Akan* culture. The *Akan* people in Ghana are made up of several sub-groups including the Ashanti, Fanti, Kwawu, Akwapim, Akyem, Bono (Brong), Ahafo, Adansi, Nzema and Sefwi. Our choice of the *Akan* culture is based, firstly, on the fact that the *Akan* people form the majority (44%) of the population in which there are about sixty-five (65) ethnic groups.[623] Secondly, the literature available on the *Akan* culture is adequate for our purpose.[624]

The traditional African concept of family is better understood within the broad traditional African world-view. Generally, across the continent this world-view has a fundamental religious orientation.[625] And a key feature of this traditional socio-religious

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[621] *cf*. A.O. Atiemo, *Religion and the Inculturation of Human Rights in Ghana* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), pp. 9-11.
[622] K. Wiredu, *Philosophy and African Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1980), pp. 6-7; *cf*. Atiemo, *Religion and the Inculturation*, p. 64.
[623] http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/tribes/akan.php (accessed on 20 May 2014); *cf*. P. Crentsil, *Death, Ancestors, and HIV/AIDS among the Akan of Ghana* (Helsinki: Helsinki University, 2007), p. 5.
[624] Studies on the *Akan* and their culture date back to the colonial period, e.g. R.S. Rattray, *Ashanti Law and Constitution* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1929).
[625] P.K. Sarpong, *Ghana in Retrospect: Some Aspects of Ghanaian Culture* (Tema: Ghana Publishing Corporation, 1974), p. 133. Sarpong is the Archbishop Emeritus of Archdiocese of Kumasi (Ghana).

world-view is the great sense of relatedness (communion). Laurenti Magesa puts it this way: 'One's life force depends on the life forces of other persons and other beings, including those of the ancestors and, ultimately, God.… [T]his is a matter of communion and communication'.[626] This network of relationships could be described as both vertical and horizontal, as well as invisible and visible. Hence, the four dimensions of the communion model enunciated in the previous chapter (*cf*. subsections 4.2.1-4.2.4) would be a helpful scheme for the presentation of the traditional Akan (African) concept of family within its broad socio-religious world-view. Thus, besides a general consideration of Traditional African Religion,[627] this chapter articulates the traditional Akan concept of family under the following sections: (a) human relations with the Supreme Being and lesser deities (as vertical-invisible), (b) human interactions with the visible representations of the lesser deities and the lower spirit-powers (as vertical-visible), (c) relations between the living and their ancestors (as horizontal-invisible) and (d) living members of the family (as horizontal-visible).

5.2 Traditional African Religion

Religion is variously defined. Thus, Richard P. McBrien writes: 'The very attempt to define religion is itself problematical. One brings already an idea of religion to the task – an idea that does not correspond with its various manifestations over the course of human history and over the face of the earth.'[628] McBrien rightly discerns another cause for the deficiency associated with many definitions of religion: 'Over the centuries the notion of

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[626] L. Magesa, *African Religion: The Moral Traditions of Abundant Life* (New York: Orbis, 1997), p. 52; *cf*. First National Catholic Pastoral Congress, *Instrumentum Laboris*, *Ecclesia in Ghana*: *On the Church in Ghana and its Evangelizing Mission in the Third Millennium, April 1997, Cape Coast* (Takoradi: St. Francis, 1997), no. 133, this document has been abbreviated as 'EIG'; *cf*. G.K. Nukunya, *Tradition and Change in Ghana: An Introduction to Sociology* (Accra: Ghana Universities, 2003), pp. 17-8, 58-9.

[627] Though often the singular (Traditional African Religion) is used, it should be understood that there are many African religions [A. Shorter, *African Christian Theology: Adaptation or Incarnation?* (New York: Orbis, 1977), p. 1; *cf*. K. Gyekye, *African Cultural Values: An Introduction* (Accra: Sankofa, 1996), p. 4].

[628] R.P. McBrien, *Catholicism* (New York: HarperCollins, 1994), p. 361; *cf*. Atiemo, *Religion and the Inculturation*, pp. 17-23.

religion has been defined … in more ways than can be categorized – philosophically, anthropologically, psychologically, sociologically, phenomenologically, culturally, and theologically.'[629] For instance, the frequently cited definition of Emile Durkheim (1858-1917) is basically sociological-phenomenological in perspective: 'A religion is a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and forbidden – beliefs and practices which unite into a single moral community called a church, all those who adhere to them.'[630] Also evident in Durkheim's definition is the influence of Christianity: he refers to the 'moral community' as 'church'.

Despite his observations, McBrien is also influenced by his Christian background in his definition of religion. He defines religion as 'the whole *complexus* of attitudes, convictions, emotions, gestures, rituals, beliefs, and institutions by which we come to terms with, and express our most fundamental relationship with *Reality* (God and the created order, perceived as coming forth from God's creative hand). That relationship is disclosed by a process we have called *revelation*.'[631] While, the element of 'revelation' in this definition is applicable to Christianity, it does not hold for Traditional African Religion, which is a natural religion.[632]

The above notwithstanding, there are aspects of McBrien's definition which apply to Traditional African Religion. Firstly, the composition of the 'whole *complexus*' in McBrien's definition applies to the Traditional African Religion.[633] Secondly, the indication of the existence of God (Supreme Being) who is the creator of all that exists holds true for Traditional African Religion.

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[629] The solution to this deficiency, we agree with McBrien, is to ensure that a definition of religion incorporates 'elements from all rather than from only one or two of these disciplines' (McBrien, *Catholicism*, p. 361). However, this is a difficult task.
[630] E. Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, trans. J. W. Swain (London: Allen & Unwin, 1915), p. 62.
[631] McBrien, *Catholicism*, p. 364.
[632] Gyekye, *African Cultural Values*, pp. 5-6.
[633] *cf*. Nukunya, *Tradition and Change in Ghana*, p. 55.

The next section elaborates more on the traditional Akan (African) belief in God as well as his attributes. Meanwhile, it is worth noting some other characteristics of Traditional African Religion in general. The first of these is that in the traditional African understanding, religion permeates all aspects of human life, for there is no separation between religion and the secular. Thus, Sarpong affirms: 'For Africa, the role of traditional religion in determining the *modus vivendi* has been vital. African cultures are known for their religious orientation. In fact, African cultures are religious cultures. It is not possible to study African culture in isolation from religion. Religion permeates the ideal African from cradle to grave.'[634]

The second characteristic is that Traditional African Religion is communal. Kwame Gyekye attests to this:

> Traditional African Religion is not primarily for the individual but for the community to which one belongs. To be born into a human community is to be born into a religious community and to find oneself, as one grows and matures, participating more and more in the ceremonial rites and festivals of that (religious) community…. Religion thus creates and strengthens the sentiments that bind members of the community together.'[635]

Thirdly, besides this social feature, Traditional African Religion has a moral role. In one breath Gyekye affirms this point: 'Religion provides sanctions for the moral obligations and responsibilities of the members of the community. Misfortunes and disasters that befall individuals, clans, or communities are very often interpreted as the consequences of, or perhaps, as punishment sent by the supernatural powers for bad conduct of failure to fulfil

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[634] P.K Sarpong, 'Can Christianity Dialogue with African Traditional Religion?', http://africaworld.net/afrel/sarpong.html (accessed on 1 September 2011); *cf.* Gyekye, *African Cultural Values*, p. 4. Recently however a few scholars, for instance, Jan Platvoet and Henk van Rinsum have attempted to challenge the generally held belief that the African is naturally religious [Platvoet & van Rinsum, 'Is Africa Incurably Religious? Confessing and Contesting an Invention', *Exchange*, 32 (2003), pp. 123-53]. In another article in the same journal, Kehinde Olabimtan argues in favour of the generally held view and against the position of Platvoet and van Rinsum. Olabimtan demonstrates how Platvoet and van Rinsum, inadvertently, fall prey to the problem of inaccurate use of their sources [Olatimtan, 'Is Africa Incurably Religious? II: A Response to Jan Platvoet and Henk van Rinsum', *Exchange*, 32 (2003), pp. 322-39]. We share in Olabimtan's position (*cf.* Atiemo, *Religion and the Inculturation*, p. 85).

[635] Gyekye, *African Cultural Values*, p. 17.

certain moral obligations to kinsfolk or community.'[636] In another breath, however, he seems to express a different view when he says that African moral values have social and humanistic bases, rather than religious basis.[637] We, however, following the position of Sarpong and others, hold that generally in the traditional African society, religion is the basis of morality.[638]

The last feature we wish to consider is that in the traditional African world-view, religious faith is utilitarian and practical.[639] Cephas N. Omenyo explains:

> Religion for the Akan and the African as a whole should serve existential needs. Religion should make life worth living, maintain and protect it against illness, mishap, enemies, and death…. Therefore, salvation in Akan primal thought does not include the Christian idea of being freed from original sin. Rather, it involves whatever contributes to the reinforcement of life in the here-and-now.[640]

Having highlighted some features of the Traditional African Religion in general, the subsequent sections will focus on the traditional *Akan* concept of family within its religious setting.

5.3 Human Relations with the Invisible Supreme Being and Lesser Deities

Adherents of the traditional Akan religion believe in a hierarchy of the supernatural beings they relate to. Using the four categorizations of Geoffrey Parrinder, the hierarchy of the supernatural (in the descending order) among Akan people is as follows: the Supreme Being, the divinities or lesser deities, the ancestors, and the charms, amulets or lower spirit-powers.[641] In this section, we are considering the first category (Supreme Being) and the

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[636] Gyekye, *African Cultural Values*, pp. 17-8.
[637] Gyekye, *African Cultural Values*, pp. 55-62.
[638] Sarpong, *Ghana in Retrospect*, p. 133.
[639] Gyekye, *African Cultural Values*, p. 16.
[640] C.N. Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism: A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana* (Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum, 2006), pp. 30-1.
[641] G. Parrinder, *West African Religion* (London: Oxford University, 1949), pp. 16-9; Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism*, pp. 26-8; M. Assimeng, *Social Structure of Ghana: A Study in Persistence and Change* (Accra: Ghana Publishing Corporation, 1999), pp. 42-3.

invisible aspect of the second category (divinities or lesser deities). Human relations with these spiritual realities could be described as 'vertical-invisible'.

5.3.1 The Supreme Being

In the traditional Akan world-view, as Omenyo writes, there is a belief in 'the existence of an all-powerful creative force whose origin is unknown. He is regarded as the creator (*Ɔbɔadeɛ*) and owner of the world (*Asase-wura*). He is thought to be immanent as well as imminent; thus he is believed to be present and active in the affairs of humans.'[642] The Akan belief in the existence of the Supreme Being (God) predates the advent of Christianity and Islam in the continent. For instance, there existed indigenous Akan names for God (*Nyame* or *Onyakopon*) and so the earliest Christian missionaries only had to adopt these names.[643]

Many attributes are ascribed to God in the traditional Akan religion. Granted that God is the creator (*Ɔbɔadeɛ*) of all that exists, some of his attributes are practical expressions of him as the creator of some specific elements of creation. For instance, the Akan call God as giver of water (*amonsu*), giver of rain (*totrobonsu*), giver of the sun (*amowia*).[644] Other attributes express certain qualities about him: his goodness, dependability, immortality, omniscience, omnipotence, holiness, mercy, justice, among others.[645]

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[642] Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism*, p. 26.
[643] Other pre-Christian and pre-Islam mission indigenous names of God include: the Ewe and the Adangbe call him *Mawu*; the Ga call him *Nyonmo*; the Tallensi say *Nayiwum*; the Mamprusi say *Nwuni*; the Frafra say *Nawine* or *Nayine*; and the Gonja say *Eboore* [M.A. Awinongya, *The Understanding of Family in Ghana as a Challenge for a Contextual Ecclesiology* (Zürich: LIT, 2013), p. 47].
[644] Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism*, p. 26; Sarpong, *Peoples Differ: An Approach to Inculturation in Evangelization* (Accra: Sub-Saharan, 2002), p. 97; Sarpong, *Ghana in Retrospect*, pp. 10-1.
[645] Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism*, p. 26; Gyekye, *African Cultural Values*, pp. 7-11; Sarpong, *Peoples Differ*, p. 97; Sarpong, *Ghana in Retrospect*, pp. 11-12.

In the traditional Akan religion, God is usually not worshipped directly.[646] Held to be transcendent, God is usually worshipped indirectly through the lesser deities.[647] This notwithstanding, as the creator of all, it is believed that he is the ultimate originator and preserver of the lives of individual humans and the life of humanity as a whole. The Akan believe that each human being is a composite of four main elements, with the two vital elements originating directly from God, and an element each from his/her parents (thus indirectly from God). Sarpong names the four human elements as: the *ɔkra* (soul), *honhom* (breath of life), *bogya* (blood) and *sunsum* (spirit). The *ɔkra* (soul) and *honhom* (breath of life) originate from God. The material aspect (*bogya*) of a human person comes from the mother, and the *sunsum* which distinguishes and determines his/her character as a unique individual comes from the father.[648] This concept shows the close link between God and the individual as well as his/her parents (and consequently his/her extended family) from the very onset of his/her existence. Therefore, though the Akan trace their family to a common human ancestress, they believe that God is the ultimate originator of all families.[649]

5.3.2 Invisible Lesser Deities

The belief in the existence of invisible lesser deities and the practices of worshipping them are common in traditional Akan societies. For the Akan, these deities range from great ethnic deity to little private deities. Sarpong categorizes them into four:

> 1. Those generally worshipped by one tribe. These traditional general deities are few in number. The Tano River is such a deity for the Ashanti.
> 2. Those worshipped by inhabitants of certain towns, localities or traditional area. These are the local deities. They are very numerous, every locality having several [of them].
> 3. Those worshipped by the smaller sections of the community such as by special lineages or village companies. Every lineage or family has its own deity of this class.

[646] Sarpong, *Ghana in Retrospect*, p. 11.
[647] Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism*, p. 27.
[648] Sarpong, *Peoples Differ*, pp. 92-3; Sarpong, *Ghana in Retrospect*, p. 37. Some authors mention only three Akan human components, leaving out the *honhom* (*cf*. Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism*, pp. 28-9).
[649] *cf*. Gyekye, *African Cultural Values*, pp. 26-7.

> 4. Those worshipped each day by one individual or his household. In practice, the individual, since he [/she] is a member of a tribe, a community, a lineage and a family, is subject to gods from all the groups.[650]

Among the Akan, the generic term for all the above categories of deities is *abosom* (singular: *ɔbosom*).[651] *Abosom* is composed of two Akan nouns: *abo* (stones) and *'som* (worship). This term, therefore, suggests that the deities which the Akan worship were formerly visibly represented by stones.[652] The nature of the deities are however perceived to be spiritual. Though it is not easy to determine their precise nature, there are certain common beliefs about the deities:

> They are said to be spirits. They have never [been] human beings. They were created by God …. They are supposed to possess astonishing powers which they may use, some to the advantage of man, others to his detriment. They may be male or female…. Even though they are creatures of God and subordinate to him, they may use their enormous powers independently of him…. They demand worship and obedience from man, in default of which they inflict punishment on him.[653]

The demand for worship of and obedience to the deities necessitates regular interactions with these spiritual beings through the performance of rituals and other religious ceremonies. These ceremonies are generally communal in nature: from the level of a whole state (e.g. Ashanti Kingdom) during a festival to the smallest unit of a household.[654]

From the other end of this vertical-invisible relationship, the degree of allegiance of humans to these deities depends on the extent to which they provide for their social and material welfare, as well as the spiritual protection they enjoyed from them. Thus, Omenyo affirms that 'the popularity of a deity depends largely on its reputed ability to perform by way of proving material and spiritual prosperity. Such deities attract devotees from far and

[650] Sarpong, *Ghana in Retrospect*, p, 14; Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism*, p. 27.
[651] Sarpong, *Ghana in Retrospect*, p, 14; Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism*, p. 27.
[652] *cf.* Sarpong, *Ghana in Retrospect*, p, 14.
[653] Sarpong, *Ghana in Retrospect*, pp. 14-5.
[654] *cf*. Sarpong, *Ghana in Retrospect*, p. 17; *cf.* Nukunya, *Tradition and Change in Ghana*, pp. 64-5.

near. However, they are abandoned if they fail to meet specific needs of groups or individuals.'[655]

5.4 Human Interactions with the Visible Representations of the Lesser Deities and Lower Spirit-Powers

This section deals with the vertical-visible dimension. Firstly, in relating to invisible deities of their state, town, village, lineage (extended family) and household, the traditional Akan believe they are 'represented' by or 'manifested' in certain physical (visible) abodes. These could be 'anything from rivers to creepers, and from beasts to rocks.'[656] Thus, while the humans-deities relationship is vertical, the representations of the latter is visible.

Secondly, among the traditional Akan, there is a belief in the existence of certain 'lower spirit powers' which take the (portable visible) forms of amulets, talismans, beads, among others. These lower spirit powers are referred to as *asuman* by the Akan. The *asuman* are believed 'to protect their users by warding off evil, and … they may also be used to harm others. The power of *asuman* is believed to be derived from small forest beings with backward feet (*mmoatia*) or the spirit of plants … or other supernatural beings such as the terrifying giants (*sasabonsam*).'[657]

Furthermore, in considering human relations with the deities or spirits through 'representations', it might be appropriate to talk about the existence of human functionaries who often aid or mediate the process. Firstly, in the traditional Akan religion, there are ritual specialists (*asofo* or *abosomfo*) who 'own' shrines of certain deities. Secondly, there are those who act as mediums (*akɔmfo*) for the deities. The *akɔmfo*, Omenyo writes, 'can

[655] Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism*, p. 27.
[656] Sarpong, *Ghana in Retrospect*, p. 15.
[657] Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism*, p. 28. There is also belief in the existence of witches and wizards, who are generally held to bring evils on individuals and their families, though a belief in 'good' witches and wizards is not lacking.

be possessed by the deities and perform functions on their behalf. *Akɔmfo* assist society by communicating with meta-empirical beings on behalf of devotees for the purposes of sacral mediation, prophecy, healing, exorcism, diagnosis, the restoration of wholeness of ill and disturbed persons'.[658] Thus, as individuals and more often as families or communities, the traditional Akan relate to the invisible deities or spirits through visible representations and the performance of rituals or ceremonies.

5.5 Relations between the Living and their Ancestors

The traditional Akan concept of family (*abusua*) entails not only members living in this world, but also the 'living dead'[659], namely the ancestors.[660] These ancestors are human by nature,[661] so the relation between them and the living family members is horizontal. However, they are usually not visible to the living.[662] It is in this sense that we are describing the relation between the ancestors and the living as horizontal-invisible.

What qualifies one to become an Akan ancestor after his/her departure from this life? For the Akan people, according to Sarpong, three basic conditions are required for a departed family member to be recognized as an ancestor: first, he/she should have been an adult; and adulthood is determined not by age, but by marital status. Thus traditionally, a married sixteen-year old girl is considered an adult, whereas an unmarried sixty-one year old man is not considered as an adult. The second condition is that one must have led a good or exemplary life. Thirdly, one must have died 'naturally', and not through a tragic means or deadly disease.[663]

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[658] Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism*, p. 27.
[659] J. Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy* (New York: Doubleday, 1970), p. 32.
[660] Sarpong, *Ghana in Retrospect*, p. 34.
[661] Sarpong, *Ghana in Retrospect*, p. 42; Gyekye, *African Cultural Values*, p. 161.
[662] Sarpong, *Ghana in Retrospect*, p. 41; *cf.* Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism*, p. 27.
[663] Sarpong, *Ghana in Retrospect*, pp. 34-6; EIG 133; Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism*, p. 27. Gyekye contests the point about exemplary life: 'It is surely not true that certain individuals upon whom the honorific title of "ancestor" is conferred necessarily led excellent moral lives, that they were "moral

In the traditional Akan belief system, the ancestors are said to be living with their relatives in a special world of spirits. That is, as on earth, the dead are said to be grouped according to clans or lineages. Thus, the Akan 'lineage never decreases in population. It can only increase.'[664] However, departed members of the family who do not qualify to be admitted into the ancestral world become ghosts hovering around the earth. They continue to do so until they are reincarnated. The process of dying, hovering around as ghost and reincarnation is repeated as long one is yet to be admitted into the ancestoral realm.[665]

The Akan ancestors, who remain relatives of the living members of the family, lineage or clan, are said to be more powerful than their living descendants. They 'get their power from the Creator, but once they have it, they seem to be able to use it independently of him. They may obtain favours from God, but they themselves are regarded as possessing the means of supplying the needs of their subjects.'[666] It is believed that the ancestors visit and watch over the living; they protect and send them help in the forms of productivity of the farms, cure of illness, child-bearing, prosperity and other material blessings.[667]

Furthermore, the Akan see their ancestors as a source of moral norms, and the centre of unity and solidarity of their extended family (lineage), clan or ethnic group as a whole.[668] In this respect, Meyer Fortes' statement about the Tallensi of northern Ghana describes as well what pertains to the Akan: 'The ancestor cult, the supreme sanction of kinship ties, is the great stabilizing force counteracting the centrifugal tendencies inherent in the lineage system. However widely the lineage may be dispersed, its members can never escape the

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paragons." There are among the people we refer to as our ancestors, chiefs who are known to have been corrupt and tyrannical rulers who led morally unworthy lives' (Gyekye, *African Cultural Values*, p. 163). However, Gyekye seems to be one of the few 'lone voices' holding this position.

[664] Sarpong, *Ghana in Retrospect*, p. 38.

[665] Sarpong, *Ghana in Retrospect*, pp. 39-40.

[666] Sarpong, *Ghana in Retrospect*, p. 40.

[667] Sarpong, *Ghana in Retrospect*, p. 43; *cf*. A.A. Kuuire, 'Dagaati Solidarity and Salvation in Christ in the Light of *Gaudium et spes*: An Anthropologico-Theological Study', Ph.D. thesis (Pontificia Universitas Lateranensis, Rome 1976), pp. 165-7.

[668] Sarpong, *Ghana in Retrospect*, pp. 41-2; *cf*. Atiemo, *Religion and the Inculturation*, p. 67.

mystical jurisdiction of their founding ancestor.'[669] As a source of their moral norms, the Akan believe that their ancestors 'take a keen interest in the moral conduct of human society and … serve as custodians of the traditional moral order, having helped to create that order themselves.'[670] The moral norms are not written. They are orally passed on, and often expressed in (prohibitive) taboos.[671]

Moreover, the ancestors are believed to be the source and custodians of the whole Akan tradition.[672] Gyekye, who affirms this point, defines tradition as 'any cultural product (i.e. values, practices, institutions, etc.) that was created or pursued by past generations and that, having been preserved by successive generations, has persisted to the present'.[673] To ensure adherence to the moral norms as well as the socio-cultural values and practices, the Akan hold that their ancestors mete out punishments to individuals or the community as a whole for any infringements.[674] The punishments may be in the form of illness, barrenness, poverty, famine or other forms of calamities. And any serious offence that affects the unity and solidarity of the family or clan could be punished with even death. In this case, the deceased is said to be invited by the ancestors to answer for the offence committed.[675] On their part, therefore, chiefs and elders of Akan societies as well as heads of their families are preoccupied with ensuring that their conducts and those of their subjects please their ancestors. And particularly at the family level, the heads endeavour to preserve family property and unity among their members in order not to incur the displeasure of the

[669] M. Fortes, 'The Political System of the Tallensi of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast' in M. Fortes & E.E. Evans-Pritchard (eds), *African Political Systems* (London: Oxford University, 1940), pp. 253-4.
[670] Gyekye, *African Cultural Values*, p. 162.
[671] Sarpong, *Ghana in Retrospect*, pp. 51-8; Sarpong, *Peoples Differ*, p. 106.
[672] Gyekye, *African Cultural Values*, p. 164.
[673] Gyekye, *African Cultural Values*, p. 164; *cf*. Crentsil, *Death, Ancestors*, pp. 31-2, 43-6.
[674] Gyekye, *African Cultural Values*, p. 162; *cf*. E. Kuukure, *The Destiny of Man: Dagaare Beliefs in Dialogue with Christian Eschatology* (Frankfurt am Main : Peter Lang, 1985), p. 67.
[675] *cf*. Sarpong, *Ghana in Retrospect*, p. 41; *cf*. Crentsil, *Death, Ancestors*, pp. 45, 47; *cf*. Magesa, *African Religion*, pp. 80-1; *cf*. Kuuire, 'Dagaati Solidarity', p. 184.

ancestors.[676] Another important response to the continuous involvement of the ancestors in the affairs of the living is ancestral veneration by the latter. This act of veneration is so pervasive among the traditional Akan, and Africans in general, such that some earlier scholars wrongly described it as 'ancestral worship'. Sarpong helps to clarify this issue:

> No Christian would accept it if Christianity were termed 'saint worship'. Christians would rightly protest The protestation would be justified on the grounds that indeed saints are not worshipped, saints are not deified…. We honour saints…. This is exactly the same idea in the veneration of ancestors in African Traditional Religion. Ancestors are not divinized. My father who dies and is regarded as an ancestor remains my father and I refer to him as my father. I honour him and I respect him for what he has done for me and others.[677]

In short, then, the traditional Akan's (Africans') belief in the existence of ancestors, their activities among the living descendants, the preoccupation to please them, as well as their veneration serve as a rallying force for family coherence and solidarity.

5.6 Living Members of the Akan (African) Family

This section considers the horizontal-visible dimension of the traditional Akan family – namely, the living members of the family, including unborn babies.[678] Besides the inclusion of the unborn, the composition of the living members of the traditional Akan concept of family far exceeds what the term 'family' connotes in the West. The (Euro-American) *nuclear* family is made up of the father, mother and children. In contrast, the Akan family of the living, usually called the *extended* family, refers to a whole clan or at least a lineage of the clan which often counts its membership across a wide geographical territory. Being matrilineal, members of the Akan clan or lineage believe that they descend

[676] *cf*. Crentsil, *Death, Ancestors*, pp. 44-5; *cf*. Magesa, *African Religion*, pp. 48, 79.
[677] Sarpong, 'Can Christianity Dialogue with African Traditional Religion?' [no page]; *cf*. Sarpong, *Ghana in Retrospect*, pp. 41-2.
[678] *cf*. Awinongya, *The Understanding of Family in Ghana*, p. 53; *cf*. SECAM, *Instrumentum Laboris – Pastoral Letter*, *The Church as Family of God:* (Accra: SECAM, 1998), no. 48.

from a common ancestress.[679] The Akan family is, however, not entirely closed in on itself; for besides blood relations, strangers could be absorbed into it.[680]

After looking at the traditional Akan clan system and marriage, this section considers the sense of community (in relation to the individual), solidarity, communal celebrations, participatory leadership and co-responsibility in the traditional Akan family set-up, as well as some disvalues of this concept of family.

5.6.1 Traditional Clan Systems and Marriage

The traditional Akan social structure is based on a clan system. There are seven or eight clans depending on the customs of the various sub-ethnic Akan groups. As a matrilineal ethnic group, each individual belongs to the clan of his/her mother. In contrast, individuals of all other ethnic groups in Ghana belong to the clans of their fathers, for they are patrilineal. Nonetheless, among the Akan as well as the other ethnic groups, inheritance, succession and status are lineally determined.[681] Furthermore, for the Akan (and generally in Ghana), a lineage is a section of a clan located in a town or village. Today, however, members of a lineage may be found in different locations.[682] The notion of the extended family among the Akan spans a lineage and sometimes a whole clan.

Marriage between members of the same clan is forbidden among the Akan, because being descendants of the same ancestress, they are held to be relatives. Thus, the rule of exogamy is in force in both monogamous and polygynous marriages of the Akan.[683] Traditional Akan marriage being exogamous, it serves as a very important bridge-building

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[679] Sarpong, *Ghana in Retrospect*, pp. 36-7.
[680] *cf*. SECAM, *The Church as Family of God*, nos 44-5.
[681] Sarpong, *Ghana in Retrospect*, p. 36. Elaborating on the broader concept of kinship in Africa, Godwin Nukunya speaks of 'double unilateral' and bilateral systems of kinship, besides the matrilineal and patrilineal systems (Nukunya, *Tradition and Change in Ghana*, pp. 36-40).
[682] Sarpong, *Ghana in Retrospect*, p. 36.
[683] Sarpong, *Ghana in Retrospect*, p. 36.

institution between lineages or families. For the Akan, marriage brings not only a man and a woman together, but it also bonds two lineages or families together.[684] Therefore, what Godwin Nukunya says about marriage in Ghana in general succinctly captures the practice among the Akan: 'When a couple is joined together in marriage, their respective lineages and families automatically become affinal relatives while the children of the union are kin to all those mentioned above. It is therefore the institution through which kinship ties are both established and extended.'[685]

5.6.2 Sense of Community

In the traditional Akan set-up, the sense or the notion of community underlies many of the family values and practices.[686] Among the Akan the individual person is perceived in relation to the community. Gyekye gives several Akan maxims to underscore this point. Here we cite only one of such Akan maxims: 'A person is not a palm-tree that he should be self-complete'. That is, the Akan hold that an individual is not self-sufficient, for he/she 'inevitably requires the relationships of others and the cooperation of others for most of his or her pursuits.'[687] This keen sense of community is common in Africa. In this respect, John Mbiti rightly articulates an African philosophy of life: 'I am because we are, and since we are, therefore I am.'[688] A statement of the Catholic bishops of the Association of Episcopal Conferences of Anglophone West Africa (AECAWA) expands on Mbiti's assertion:

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[684] Gyekye, *African Cultural Values*, p. 79.
[685] Nukunya, *Tradition and Change in Ghana*, pp. 41, 45; Awinongya, *The Understanding of Family in Ghana*, p. 54.
[686] For a general concept of community, see subsection 2.5.6c; *cf*. Gyekye, *African Cultural Values*, pp. 35-6.
[687] Gyekye, *African Cultural Values*, p. 37.
[688] Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, p. 141.

> The African lives in community. It has been said that Descartes wrote: *Cogito ergo sum* (I think; therefore I am). The African would say: *Cognatus sum ergo sum* (I am related; therefore I am). The African has his full humanity in community. There are sayings among the Tum-buka of Malawi that 'A man is a man because of others' and 'Life is when you are together, alone you are an animal'. These sayings are easily applicable to all Africa.'[689]

The above notwithstanding, for the Akan, the individual is not obliterated by his/her community.[690] An Akan maxim, which evidences the value of the individual in relation to the community, runs as follows: 'The clan is like a cluster of trees which, when seen from afar, appear huddled together, but which would be seen to stand *individually* when closely approached.'[691] Furthermore, a person, for the Akan, has not only the right to his/her individuality, he/she has responsibilities. Another maxim affirms this: 'Life is as you yourself make it.'[692] In short then, among the Akan, and Africans in general, the great importance placed on the community does not negate the importance of an individual.[693]

5.6.3 Solidarity

The communal nature of life among the Akan underlies the great importance they attach to solidarity, harmony and cooperation in their (extended) families.[694] Here, solidarity is understood as the sense of belonging or we-feeling among the members of the extended family, and the mutual support derived from it.[695] In support of the importance that the

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[689] *Report of the Fifth Plenary Assembly of AECAWA Conference on Evangelization, Held in Kumasi (Ghana) in August, 1989* (AECAWA: no place and date indicated), p. 37. The bishops of AECAWA and their Francophone counterparts have now merged their associations into one: Regional Episcopal Conferences of West Africa (RECOWA).

[690] On the one hand, Ifeanyi A. Menkiti is right in saying that in the African view, 'man is defined by reference to the environing community.' On the other hand, we share in Robert K. Aboagye-Mensah's observation that the former exaggerates when he describes the African notion of community as 'a thoroughly fused collective we' [Menkiti, 'Personality and Community in African Traditional Thought' in R.A. Wright (ed.), *African Philosophy: An Introduction,* 3rd ed. (Lanham: University Press of America, 1984), pp. 171-2, 179; Aboagye-Mensah, *Mission and Democracy in Africa: The Role of the Church* (Accra: Asempa, 1994), 76; *cf.* Awinongya, *The Understanding of Family in Ghana*, pp. 62-3].

[691] Gyekye, *African Cultural Values*, p. 47.

[692] Gyekye, *African Cultural Values*, p. 48.

[693] Aboagye-Mensah, *Mission and Democracy*, 76; Gyekye, *African Cultural Values*, p. 47; Awinongya, *The Understanding of Family in Ghana*, pp. 61-3; Atiemo, *Religion and the Inculturation*, pp. 122-4.

[694] *cf*. Gyekye, *African Cultural Values*, p. 17.

[695] *cf*. G.K. Tanye, *The Church-as-Family and Ethnocentrism in Sub-Saharan Africa* (Münster: LIT, 2010), pp. 28-9.

Akan, and for that matter, Ghanaians attach to solidarity, Gyekye narrates some folklores and cites certain Akan maxims. Here we wish to cite a few of the maxims:

> One finger cannot lift a thing.
>
> If one person alone scrapes the bark of a tree for use as medicine, the pieces fall to the ground.
>
> The left arm washes the right arm, and the right arm washes the left arm.[696]

These maxims of solidarity are practically experienced in the extended family through mutual sharing and caring among the members. They share both the blessings and difficulties of one another; and there is love and affection especially for the sick, disabled and aged. Duties and rights are distributed and accepted in this sense of belonging and being the brother's (sister's) keeper.[697]

5.6.4 Communal Celebrations

Solidarity and communality among members of Akan families are expressed also through common celebrations. Besides the communal worship of their deities and the veneration of ancestors, especially during their festivals (*cf*. sections 5.3, 5.5), the marking of the rites of passage among the Akan brings together members of the family, clan and even a whole state. The rites of passage are performed at the turning points of one's existence in order to usher him/her from one stage of life to the next.[698] Among the Akan, four important stages of life are marked: birth, puberty, marriage and death. Firstly, there is a naming ceremony – traditionally on the eighth day of the child's birth – to initiate the baby into the family. Without this ceremony the baby is seen as not yet fully human. Therefore, he/she is not yet a member of the family.[699] Secondly, among the Akan, the puberty rite (*bragoro*) is performed for girls (between twelve and sixteen years of age) to

[696] Gyekye, *African Cultural Values*, p. 37.
[697] *cf*. SECAM, *The Church as Family of God*, nos 57-8.
[698] Sarpong, *Peoples Differ*, p. 109.
[699] Sarpong, *Peoples Differ*, p. 109.

introduce them into adulthood. By this rite a maiden is presented to the public as mature and suitable for marriage. Unlike the Akan, some other ethnic groups have puberty rites for boys as well.[700]

Thirdly, for the Akan, marriage marks the sealing of the adulthood into which one was initiated at the puberty rites. And though boys do not go through puberty rites, they also attain adulthood via marriage. One who is married is not only seen as mature by also responsible.[701] The final rites of passage among the Akan are those performed at the death of a family member. The Akan have elaborate rites by which the deceased is ushered into the world of the ancestors. These include post-mortem rituals, ceremonies in the washing of the corpse, funeral ceremonies when the body is lying in state, burial rites, and post-burial rites and celebrations.[702]

The planning of the above rites of passage, especially the funeral and burial rites, includes how to raise the required funds, to provide the adequate logistics for the events, and the assignment of certain roles. Members of the family are often levied, though some individuals may volunteer donations.[703] In addition, all the rites of passage are largely communal as well as religious in nature. And the religious aspects entail, among other things, the pouring of libations to seek the blessings of the deities and, particularly, the ancestors who are members of the family.

[700] B.M. Sackey, 'Cultural Responses to the Management of HIV/AIDS: The Repackaging of Puberty Rites', *Research Review NS* 17 (2001), pp. 9-10.
[701] Sarpong, *Ghana in Retrospect*, pp. 73-4; Gyekye, *African Cultural Values*, pp. 76-81.
[702] Crentsil, *Death, Ancestors,* pp. 55-67; Sarpong, *Peoples Differ*, p. 108; Sarpong, *Ghana in Retrospect*, pp. 26, 29-32.
[703] Crentsil, *Death, Ancestors,* 55-8; Sarpong, *Peoples Differ*, p. 108; Sarpong, *Ghana in Retrospect*, pp. 26, 29-32.

5.6.5 Participatory Leadership and Co-Responsibility

The leadership approach and the manner of participation by the subjects in a traditional Akan state is usually replicated at the extended family level. Therefore, in this subsection, the state of affairs in the larger society is described with the understanding that it applies to the smaller unit of the family as well. For illustration, we are using the traditional socio-political set-up of the Ashanti, the major sub-ethnic group of the Akan. The Ashanti Kingdom is structured in several concentric circles. First of all, there is the king (*Asantehene*) who oversees the whole kingdom. Under him, there are paramount chiefs (*Adansihene*, *Bekwaihene*, *Offinsohene*, *Asumejahene*, *Kokofuhene*, *Juabenhene*, *Nsutahene*, *Mamponhene*, *Agonahene,* etc.) who oversee various traditional areas of the kingdom. Then under these paramount chiefs (*ahenfo*, singular: *ɔhene*), there are other chiefs of lower rank who oversee smaller towns and villages. The *Asantehene*, according to Sarpong, is chosen from the *Oyoko* clan of Kumasi, the seat of the kingdom; and he has 'the paramount chiefs as his councillors with whom he exercise[s] traditional authority over Asante.'[704] This *centralized* form of governance does not pertain to some ethnic groups in Ghana and Africa in general. The latter practice what is often called the *dispersed* form of governance, whereby various traditional subunits of the society are autonomous.[705]

Furthermore, unlike the patrilineal ethnic groups, the Ashanti, being matrilineal, have female counterparts to the male-chiefs at various levels. Thus Sarpong writes: 'Every leader from the clan head to the village chief, to the traditional area chief, to the *Asantehene*, [has] a female counterpart – *ɔhemmaa*.' This name (*ɔhemmaa*) is a combination of the words, *ɔhene* (chief) and *ɔbaa* (woman/female). 'At each stage, the chief and the *ɔhemmaa*

[704] Sarpong, 'Culture, Politics, Education and Modernity', *The Catholic Standard*, 23-29 March 2014, p. 5.
[705] E.E. Uzukwu, *A Listening Church: Autonomy and Communion in African Churches* (New York: Orbis, 1996), pp. 120, 126-32; *cf*. Orobator, 'Leadership and Ministry in Church-as-Family', *Hekima Review*, 17 (1997), p.10; *cf*. P. Benson, *The Church in the Theological Writings of Avery Dulles: Impulses for African Theology* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2007), pp. 295-7.

rule the people. The chiefs, male and female, [are] made leaders by ascription, not by election. Any male in any ruling clan could be chosen as chief, and every female in any ruling clan could be chosen as [*ɔhemmaa*].'[706] The chief (*ɔhene* or *ɔhemmaa*) is, however, not the head of the royal clan or lineage.[707]

Though the people of the traditional Ashanti state, and Akan societies in general, are not directly involved in the choice of their king or chief, he/she is never imposed on them. Gyekye explains that the person chosen 'must be acceptable to the whole body of citizens. If there should be widespread opposition to the choice of the kingmakers, the person will have to be replaced by another person from the royal lineage.'[708] Furthermore, the participation of the Akan subjects in governance goes beyond their act of approving the 'election' of the king or chief. They are involved in the decision-making process through the council of elders at various levels as well through general community assemblies. Thus, Sarpong rightly observes that 'there [are] checks and balances on what the chief could do. If he stubbornly refuse[s] to heed the advice of his councillors, he could be destooled.'[709]

There is another institution of the Ashanti which counter-balances the power of the chief and his councillors. This is, according to Sarpong, 'the institution of *nkwankwa* or *abontendom* – crowd or the young men.' It exists in every village or traditional area. Its 'leader [is] a very powerful person. He [is] never appointed or voted for. He [is] chosen by acclamation among the people. He [does] not come from any particular clan. In fact, any *nkwankwa* could be *nkwankwahene* or *abontendomhene*.'[710] The Ashanti socio-political set-up applies more or less to the Akan people in general. We, therefore, share in the assertion of Gyekye that the authority of the Akan chief derives, functionally, from his

[706] Sarpong, 'Culture, Politics, Education and Modernity', p. 5.
[707] Sarpong, *Ghana in Retrospect*, p. 37; Gyekye. *African Cultural Values*, p. 109.
[708] Gyekye, *African Cultural Values*, p. 112.
[709] Sarpong, 'Culture, Politics, Education and Modernity', p. 5.
[710] Sarpong, 'Culture, Politics, Education and Modernity', p. 5.

people, and 'there is a close relationship between the ruler and ruled in matters of regal (political) powers.' Gyekye further substantiates his assertion with the oath of office of an Akan chief and some Akan maxims.[711]

Though the participatory form of leadership among the Akan does not obtain in every traditional African state, some early foreign scholars and travellers have recorded its existence in other parts of Africa. Here, we wish to only reproduce Gyekye's citation of an observation made in the central part Africa in the nineteenth century by a Briton:

> All government is by the *will of the people*, whether it be the choice and coronation of a king; the selection of a man to fill a new chieftainship; the framing, proclamation, and promulgation of a new law; the removal of the village from one site to another; the declaration of war or the acceptance of terms of peace: everything must be put to the poll and come out stamped with the imprimatur of the people's will. *No permanent form of negro government can exist save that based four square on the people's will*.[712]

We, therefore, associate ourselves with the following comment of Gyekye: 'in the traditional African political practice the will of the people plays a significant role, for the chief has to rule with the consent of the people. In the event of the chief's failure to make his rule reflect the popular will, he can be defied or even deposed.' He, however, rightly acknowledges that there are exceptions: given the multiplicity of traditional African polities, it is possible 'that systems of despotism and authoritarianism existed in some places.'[713]

The will of the people in traditional African states 'is usually expressed formally in the councils of the chiefs and in other assemblies where the people are free to express their opinions. Matters are never settled until everyone has had a chance to speak; and to carry out any programme requires the sanction of the whole group or clan. They will talk and talk

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[711] Gyekye, *African Cultural Values*, pp. 109-10.
[712] D. Campbell, *In the Heart of Bantuland: A Record of Twenty-Nine Years in Central Africa among the Bantu Peoples* (London: Seely Service & Co., 1922), p. 42, cited in Gyekye, *African Cultural Values*, p. 111; the italics is Gyekye's.
[713] Gyekye, *African Cultural Values*, pp. 111, 116, 155.

until they arrive at a consensus.'[714] This participatory and consensus building process for decision-making is often called the 'palaver system'. [715]

The 'palaver system', which Hugo Hinfelaar rightly calls the 'prototype of African authority', takes place at various levels of an African state and of the extended families therein.[716] He gives an illuminating description of the system in the extended family composed of concentric circles of families:

> The prototype of African authority is the circular model with the members of the households as centre, who through *communal consent* and by listening to the voices of the surrounding living dead would come to certain decisions that would be binding for everyone. One may compare this dynamic model with the slowly growing life-circles, the rings of a tree; these concentric bands of wood corresponding in number to the tree's age. There is an inner core of those alive, of the source of life through which new life is being reproduced. Slowly this inner kernel moves outwards to make place for a new generation of those alive and becomes increasingly part of the living dead. Further outwards are other and older rings of more transcendental presence: the circular ring of the family spirits, then a wider ring of the more collective spirits, followed by nature divinities, the messengers of the Divine and finally the outer circle that encompasses everything, the one of God himself who as parent envelopes all of it and holds everything in hand.
>
> All these sources of authority, increasingly important as they grow wider, are spiritually focused towards the middle, are involved with the life of the inner core, in fact, like the outer whiter part and the bark of a tree, they depend on the quality of life of the hard centre, of the kernel. The life-stream of authority is not so much from high to low, but reciprocally from outwards to inwards and back again from within the outer periphery, all mutually dependent on one another.[717]

Among others, we wish to highlight four points from Hinfelaar's insightful analogy. Firstly, there is reciprocity between the members of the small households and the higher authorities. Secondly, due importance is given to the members of the small households. Thirdly, decision-making is by consensus. And fourthly, Hinfelaar mentions an important point that many other authors tend to overlook: a listening ear is given 'to the voices of the surrounding living dead', namely the ancestors. In such a participatory type of leadership,

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[714] Gyekye, *African Cultural Values*, p. 111.
[715] E.B. Tengan, *House of God: Church-as-Family from an African Perspective* (Leuven: Acco, 1997), pp. 97-9; Benson, *The Church in the Theological Writings of Avery Dulles*, p. 296.
[716] H. Hinfelaar, 'Evangelization and Inculturation', *AFER*, 36 (1994), p. 10; Gyekye, *African Cultural Values*, p. 116.
[717] Hinfelaar, 'Evangelization and Inculturation', pp. 10-1.

particularly in the area of decision-making, members of the traditional family feel co-responsible for the needs and duties of their family.[718]

5.6.6 Some African Family Disvalues

Notwithstanding the above-mentioned values of the traditional Akan, and for that matter African, concept of family, one cannot overlook its disvalues.[719] Here we only wish to highlight a few of them. In the first place, among the Akan and Africans in general, whereas marriage as a bond between two families (lineages) has the merit of providing moral and socio-economic support for the couple and their children, it also has the demerit of interferences from or demands by several family members or in-laws.[720] Secondly, the value of solidarity could degenerate into the ills of ethnocentrism; this is particularly so when the notion of 'blood' in the maxim, 'blood is thicker than water', is sentimentally and literally interpreted as 'natural blood ties'.[721] This could mean not giving support to another person who is seen as an 'outsider' to the family;[722] or even in worse situations, it could cause violence and conflict between ethnic groups in Africa.[723]

Thirdly, some aspects of the 'palavers system' need to be critically looked at (*cf.* subsection 7.2.3). There is, first of all, the issue of adult male-predominance of the membership of the council of elders at each level of the concentric circles of the family. Male predominance is especially the case in the patrilineal set-up; though sometimes

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[718] *cf.* Gyekye, *African Cultural Values*, pp, 115-6.
[719] EIA 63; SECAM, *The Church as Family of God*, nos 49-51, 71; EIG 234-5.
[720] *cf.* Nukunya, *Tradition and Change in Ghana*, pp. 164-5.
[721] Tanye, *The Church-as-Family and Ethnocentrism*, pp. 136-8, 143-63; EIA 63; SECAM, *The Church as Family of God*, nos 72-5, 83; EIG 234-5.
[722] The limitation of the benefits of solidarity to only family members has made some authors question the legitimacy of the distinction often made in the descriptions of the African societies as 'communalistic' and the Western societies as 'individualistic'. Martin Chanock, for instance, argues against such a distinction, giving instances where Western societies are more communalistic than African societies [Chanock, 'Human Rights and Cultural Branding: Who Speaks and How?' in A.A. An-Na'im (ed.), *Cultural Transformation and Human Rights in Africa* (London: Zed, 2002), pp. 38-67, esp. pp. 47-8; *cf.* Atiemo, *Religion and the Inculturation*, pp. 123-4].
[723] SECAM, *The Church as Family of God*, nos 85-6.

suggestions of the women are passed on through their male relatives. There is also the issue of paternalism. Though this is not an inherent demerit of the 'palaver system', it has crept into the original African way of exercising authority, as a result of socio-cultural and political changes since the days of slave trade and colonization.[724] Paternalism leads to excessive prestige on the part of the leaders and their associates – and this, at the expense of their subjects, most especially the poor ones.[725]

5.7 Conclusion

The traditional Akan, and for that matter African, concept of family is inextricably linked with its religious world-view. This traditional concept of family comprises of a complex network of human and spiritual relationships. In this chapter, the network has been schematized into four dimensions, with the understanding that in reality they overlap. The first of the dimensions, referred to as 'vertical-invisible', concerns human relations with the invisible God and the invisible deities, with the former being the creator and originator of all beings, and consequently, of their relationships. Secondly, there is the 'vertical-visible' dimension; that is, human interactions with the visible representations of the invisible deities and lower spirit-powers. Thirdly, there is the ongoing relationship between the living and the ancestors of their family; this has been described as the 'horizontal-invisible' dimension. Fourthly, the living members of the family, which is more extensive than the nuclear family, has been labelled the 'horizontal-visible' dimension.

In addition, certain communal values (e.g. solidarity, communal celebrations, participatory leadership and co-responsibility) have been indicated. On the other hand,

[724] Hinfelaar affirms that the traditional African 'paradigm came under heavy pressure in many parts of Africa where a highly centralized chieftainship and colonial administration was imposed from the fifteen century onwards' [Hinfelaar, 'Evangelization and Inculturation', p. 11; *cf.* S.O. Eboh, 'Leadership in African Traditional Culture and Social Justice in the Light of Can. 222 §2', in E.M.P. Edeh (ed.), *The Church of Jesus the Saviour in Africa*, vol. 2 (Enugu: Madonna, 2009), p. 393].
[725] SECAM, *The Church as Family of God*, nos 81-2.

certain disvalues (e.g. ethnocentrism and paternalism) have also been mentioned. To a large extent, the traditional Akan (African) concept of family has been presented in its pre-Christian (mission) and pre-colonial form. Culture is, however, dynamic. The encounters with Christianity and Islam, the slave trade, colonization, modernization, urbanization and globalization have all contributed to effect socio-cultural changes in Akan societies and Africa as a whole.[726] This notwithstanding, the essence of certain traditional Akan (African) cultural elements have remained resilient. Thus, for instance, though urbanization has affected the network of relations of the extended family by narrowing it down in some cases, the extended family system, we concur with Nukunya, 'is by no means dead.'[727] Elsewhere, he even puts it more positively: 'the extended family in Ghana and in Africa has a longer life span than many people are prepared to grant it.'[728] And among the values of the extended family which are still resilient in contemporary Africa, one could mention solidarity and co-responsibility.[729] Furthermore, there are traditional Akan (African) communal values which seem to have been lost to the forces of socio-cultural changes, but which are relevant to contemporary Africa 'even if they must undergo some refinement and pruning'.[730] Participatory leadership is one of such 'rediscovered' communal values.[731]

These resilient and 'rediscovered' features and values of the traditional Akan (African) family are the tracks on which the wheels of contextualization should run. On the other hand, the disvalues of the Akan (African) family could be seen as the necessary resistive headwind against the motion of the process of contextualization. How far the

[726] Gyekye, *African Cultural Values*, pp. 171-3; A. Shorter, *Towards a Theology of Inculturation* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1988), pp. 45-58; Nukunya, *Tradition and Change in Ghana*, pp. 147-66; P. Kanyandogo, 'Rethinking African Ecclesiology: Challenges from People's Rights and Participation' in C. McGarry & P. Ryan (eds), *Inculturating the Church in Africa: Theological and Practical Perspectives* (Nairobi: Paulines, 2001), pp. 99-101.
[727] Nukunya, *Tradition and Change in Ghana*, p. 161.
[728] Nukunya, *Tradition and Change in Ghana*, p. 166.
[729] EIG 85; Nukunya, *Tradition and Change in Ghana*, pp. 161-3.
[730] Gyekye, *African Cultural Values*, p. 174.
[731] Gyekye, *African Cultural Values*, p. 177.

process of the contextualization of church-*family of God* has travelled until now is the concern of the next chapter. Subsequently, chapter seven proposes how to lubricate the process to enhance its motion in the local church (Ghana).

CHAPTER SIX: THE RECEPTION OF THE CONCILIAR COMMUNION MODEL IN AFRICAN THEOLOGY AND PRAXIS: THE CHURCH AS GOD'S FAMILY

6.1 Introduction

Having considered the traditional African (Ghanaian) concept of family in the previous chapter, the present chapter considers how the primary ecclesiological model of communion is being received as church-*family of God*, in theology and praxis, by the Catholic Church in Africa and Ghana in particular. One may ask why the Catholic Church in Africa seeks to contextualize the primary model of communion. This endeavour is being undertaken because it is believed that it will facilitate the process of reception. The degree of reception of the communion-based ecclesiology of Vatican II in Africa and for that matter in Ghana was low as at the time of the first *Special Assembly for Africa of the Synod of Bishops* (1994).[732]

[732] The first *Special Assembly for Africa of the Synod of Bishops* was convoked by Pope John Paul II on 6 January, 1989, and it took place from 10 April to 8 May 1994, in Rome. Prior to the convocation of the synod, some African theologians (beginning from 1977) and the bishops of the Democratic Republic of Congo, during the visit of the pope to Kinshasa in May, 1980, had called for an African Council [M.A. Awinongya, *The Understanding of Family in Ghana as a Challenge for a Contextual Ecclesiology* (Zürich: LIT, 2013), pp. 133-5]. The wish to have an African Council was spreading among more African bishops and theologians, and so with the pope's announcement, a debate ensued: should the church in Africa have a 'council' or a 'synod' of bishops? Since, on the one hand, the church in Africa alone could not have held an *ecumenical* council (*cf.* can. 336-41), and on the other hand, a *particular* council was less juridical (*cf.* can. 439-44), the better option left was to hold a synod [J.O. Faniran, 'A Council or Synod for Africa: The Overlooked Aspect', *AFER*, 36 (1994), pp. 59-64; Faniran, 'Journeying Together into the 21st Century', *AFER*, 37 (1995), pp. 34-8)]. But then another question arose: would the synod be held in Rome or somewhere in Africa? When in February, 1993, in Kampala (Uganda) on the occasion of promulgating the *Instrumentum Laboris*, the pope announced that the synod would be held in Rome, many bishops meeting him then were disappointed. Renato K. Sesana, who wrote an open letter to the pope on this issue, called for the synod to be held in Africa (Sesana, 'An African Synod Without Africa?', *AFER*, 35 (1993), pp. 134-5). On the other hand, other African scholars, like Chukuma Okoye and Faniran, justified the holding of the synod in Rome, (Okoye, 'The Special Assembly for Africa of the Synod of Bishops – the *Instrumentum Laboris*', *AFER*, 35 (1993), p. 173; Faniran, 'Journeying Together', pp. 34-8). Anyway two decades after the synod, our main interests in this study are the deliberations of the synod especially relating to the church as *family of God* and the related fruits of the synod, especially the post-synodal apostolic exhortation of John Paul II: *Ecclesia in Africa*, 14 September 1995, AAS 88 (1996), pp. 5-82. Subsequently, for the sake of brevity, we shall refer to the *Special Assembly for Africa of the Synod of Bishops* simply as the 'first African Synod' (as this is usual among African scholars).

The low reception of the communion-based ecclesiology was allegorically captured by the then Archbishop of Tamale (Ghana), Gregory E. Kpiebaya:

> By and large, a good number of Catholic Christians, [many] years after Vatican II, still see the church as a *service utility* which does not belong to them, let alone a *family* to which they belong. Their attitude towards it is like that of travellers in a passenger bus. They appreciate the fact that the bus is there and gives them service but in their mind they know that the bus is not theirs, therefore they feel no responsibility towards it. Among themselves they are strangers to one another and, choose to remain so throughout the journey, even though they occasionally talk to one another. If the bus needs to be pushed, some will offer to push it because it increases their likelihood to reach their destination, but for the rest, as far as the bus is concerned, it is not their business. It is the problem of the crew. The allegory is clear. *The bus is the church, the crew are the bishops and priests, the passengers are the [lay] faithful*.[733]

While not all the lay faithful of the Catholic Church in Africa feel like 'passengers' in the ecclesial 'bus', a great portion of them feel so and/or exhibit this attitude. To change this situation and at the same time enhance the reception of the communion-based ecclesiology of Vatican II, the fathers of first African Synod embraced and recommended for the Catholic Church in Africa the then emerging model church-*family of God*.[734] The synod fathers, as re-echoed by Pope John Paul II, found this contextual model 'as an expression of the church's nature particularly appropriate for Africa,'[735] because it is based on a very familiar and a most cherished African experience of family life.[736] There are also other reasons which support the appropriateness of the use of the notion of family to describe the church. That is, it has good bases in Scriptures, the church fathers, Vatican II and some post-conciliar documents of the magisterium. Some African theologians,

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[733] This was taken from the foreward written by Archbishop (Emeritus) Kpiebaya in the document that compiled the talks and resolution of the Tamale Archdiocesan Pastoral Congress held to climax the Great Jubilee Year (2000) and the fiftieth anniversary of the creation of diocese: *Church as Family of God: Tamale Archdiocesan Pastoral Congress, 2-5 January, 2001* (Tamale: Centre for Pastoral Formation, 2001), p. 4.
[734] *cf. Church as Family of God: Tamale*, pp. 4-5; *cf.* A.E. Orobator, 'A Church in Dialogue as the Family of God' in C. McGarry (ed.), *What Happened at the African Synod* (Nairobi: Paulines, 1995), p. 34.
[735] First African Synod, *Propositio* no. 8; *Ecclesia in Africa* no. 63. Subsequently the latter document is abbreviated as EIA.
[736] *cf. Church as Family of God: Tamale*, p. 4; *cf.* Orobator, 'A Church in Dialogue', p. 35.

especially since the first African Synod, have traced these biblical, magisterial and theological foundations of the theology of the church as *family of God* (*cf.* subsection 6.2.3).

Another preliminary question which arises, in view of the approach of Dulles which we have adopted, is whether the imagery of *family of God* could be employed as a model. Following the thought of Dulles, we answer this question in the affirmative. That is, the image could be employed in a reflective and critical manner such that, as much as possible, only aspects of the analogy of family that illuminate the mystery of the church are made use of. Such a critical approach ensures that the demerits (e.g. ethnocentrism) of the African notion of family do not creep into the ecclesiology of *family of God*.[737] Furthermore, there is an attempt in this study to identify instances where some African theologians have overstretched some elements of the family analogy to illustrate the mystery of the church. On the other hand, there is an effort to discern instances where others, due to the limitation of the notion of family, have neglected key characteristics (e.g. pneumatological feature) of the church (*cf.* subsection 6.2.3 and section 6.4). Due to the limitations of the model church-*family of God*, it needs to be complemented by other models of the church.[738] Hence, the next chapter considers a harmonization of the model church-*family of God* with the six models of Dulles.

This chapter is divided into two main sections: the first section deals with the reception by the Catholic Church in Africa as a whole, and the second section considers the reception by the local church in Ghana. Just as the 1985 Extraordinary Synod of Bishops (Rome) could be seen as a *watershed* in the understanding of the conciliar ecclesiology of communion (*cf.* section 2.6), so the first African Synod (held about a decade later) could be considered as a *watershed* for the reception of this primary model as 'family of God' in the

[737] *cf.* EIA 63.
[738] *cf.* subsection 3.8.3; *cf. Propositio* no. 8; EIA 63.

African context.[739] Therefore, in this study, the first African Synod is considered as the determinant factor for the categorization of the periods of reception on the continent. Consequently, for the reception on the continental level we have three phases: the situations prior to, during and after the first African Synod. The first phase considers some theological and practical pastoral efforts in experiencing the church as communion and hence as family. In the second phase, there is a consideration of some documents and interventions of the first African Synod. Then, for the third phase, we consider some theological works since first African Synod.

Once again, in the second section of this chapter, which deals with the reception of the model church-*family of God* in Ghana, the first African Synod serves as the demarcating line for the phases, though here we have only two phases: the situations prior to and since that synod. Our presentation on the first phase is informed by what we can decipher from the pastoral letters, communiques and memoranda of the Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference for the period 1968 to 1993. In addition, we scan the documents of the only diocesan synod (Kumasi, 1984) which pre-dated the first African Synod to see if there was any proposal to build the church as *family of God*. Then, there is a consideration of *Ecclesia in Ghana*[740] to see if it gives us a snapshot of the situation prior to the first African Synod. The second phase deals with the statements of the Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference between 1994 and 2013, documents of the first (Ghana) National Pastoral Congress, documents of synods of six dioceses and of pastoral congresses of three dioceses. Moreover, there is an elaboration on the findings of our field research conducted between May and September, 2013 in nine dioceses.

[739] *cf*. Faniran, 'Journeying Together', pp. 35, 38.
[740] *Ecclesia in Ghana* is the *Instrumentum Laboris* of local church's first National Pastoral Congress, held in Cape Coast, 7-14 April, 1997.

6.2 Reception of the Communion Model as 'Family of God' by the Catholic Church in Africa

In our consideration of the reception of Vatican II in general and of its communion-based ecclesiology in particular, the first phase began with John XXIII's announcement of convocation of the council (*cf*. chapter two). However, for the reception of the conciliar communion model as *family of God*, we wish to consider the year the council ended (1965) as the beginning of the first phase.[741] This is because the understanding of the church as *family of God* in the debates and the documents of Vatican II is outside the scope of this study (*cf*. section 1.4).[742]

6.2.1 Prior to the First African Synod (1965-1994)

The reception of the communion-based ecclesiology of Vatican II in Africa has been a gradual process. In the early post-conciliar years, African approaches to ecclesiology were less prominent among Catholic theologians than we find today. Among the reasons accounting for this, one could mention, firstly, that many African Catholic theologians of that time were preoccupied with African approaches to christology. Secondly, the then dominance of certain conciliar ecclesiological perspectives seemed to have been an indirect

[741] It is, however, noteworthy that one could trace, albeit only implicitly, the understanding of the church as family to the 1940s *Jamaa* movement in the then Belgium Congo. *Jamaa* is a Swahili word with Arabic roots; and it means the *sense of community* or *togetherness*. The Belgium missionary, Placide Temples, who passionately promoted this movement, also wrote about it in his influential book on the theory of 'vital force' [Temples, *La Philosophie Bantoue* (Elisabethville: 1945); the English translation of this book, entitled, *Bantu Philosophy*, was published in 1959]. For further discussions on the socio-political contexts of the idea and movement of *Jamaa* one could refer to the following: A. Ramazani Bishwende, *Église-famille-de-Dieu: Esquisse d'ecclésiologie africaine* (Paris: l'Harmattan, 2001), see especially pp. 21-23; *cf*. O.A. Onwubiko, *The Church in Mission in the Light of Ecclesia in Africa* (Nairobi: Paulines, 2001), pp. 26-47; *cf*. F. Appiah-Kubi, *L'Église, Famille de Dieu: Un chemin pour les Églises d'Afrique* (Paris: Karthala, 2008), p. 81. Here and subsequently, for the English translations of French citations we have made use of Appiah-Kubi's uncompleted (unpublished) translation of his book.

[742] Others have adequately treated this issue. Appiah-Kubi, for instance, dedicates two chapters of his work to the consideration of the notion of the church as family of God in the debates and documents of Vatican II (Appiah-Kubi, *L'Église, Famille de Dieu*, pp. 25-77).

disincentive for the contextualization of the conciliar ecclesiology. Francis Appiah-Kubi affirms this point:

> The church, *familia Dei*, [had] not been the object of any particular attention due to the usage of images such as body of Christ or people of God. In fact, it [had] not received any theological elaboration, neither in the conciliar texts promulgated nor in the years following immediately the Vatican Council II. It [had] stayed unseen, or [had] been overwhelmed by the ecclesiology of the people of God or that of the body of Christ. The theological development of this concept 'church as family of God'… remained the work of individual initiatives till its highlighting by the Special Assembly [for Africa of the Synod of Bishops].[743]

It is, however, clear from the above citation that the prominence of the conciliar ecclesiological perspectives did not entirely eclipse attempts towards contextualization. Three main African ecclesiological approaches could be identified in the period between Vatican II and the first African Synod: (a) the church as *tribe/clan*, (b) the church with a *negro face*, and (c) the church as *family of God*.[744]

(a) The Church as Tribe/Clan

Vincent Mulago is one of the earliest proponents of the church as tribe/clan.[745] In the very year (1965) Vatican II was officially concluded, he presented his thesis in Rome in which he attempted a contextualization of Catholic ecclesiology, making use of the traditional structures of kinship and the spirituality of the three Great Lakes clans of the Bantu tribe: the Bashi, Banyanrwanda and Barundi.[746] Members of the three clans, according to Mulago, are all descendants of a first ancestor, founder of the primordial Bantu tribe. By analogy, Mulago says, the church is a new universal tribe, a new race, a new people whose founder is Jesus Christ. Consequently, he holds that the church is more than a

[743] Appiah-Kubi, *L'Église, Famille de Dieu*, p. 50.
[744] Appiah-Kubi, *L'Église, Famille de Dieu*, p. 81.
[745] John M. Waliggo would also later elaborate on the notion of the church as a clan [J.M. Waliggo, 'The African Clan as the True Model of the African Church' in J.N.K. Mugambi & L. Magesa (eds), *The Church in African Christianity: Innovative Essays in Ecclesiology* (Nairobi: Initiatives, 1990), pp. 111-28].
[746] V. Mulago, *Un visage africain du christianisme: L'union vitale Bantu face à l'unité vitale ecclésiale* (Paris: Présence Africaine, 1965), p. 263, cited in Appiah-Kubi, *L'Église, Famille de Dieu*, p. 81.

human tribe – it 'is a community of "associated-in-life",'[747] through the mysteries of the incarnation of and redemption by the Son of God. By the use of the means of the word of God and the sacraments, members of the church share in the same life.[748]

Secondly, there exists a vital union among the three clans of the Bantu tribe and therefore among all her members. This union is experienced as a community of life and solidarity. Mulago sees this as appropriate in expressing the communal nature of the church.[749] While we appreciate the pioneering work of Mulago, we share in the observation of Appiah-Kubi that some aspects of the former's tribal ecclesiology could reinforce a certain tendency to a pyramidal hierarchy.[750] Secondly, excessive particularism, ethnocentrism and other disvalues are easily associated with the notion of tribe.[751]

(b) The Church with a Negro Face

By the time of the 1974 Synod of Bishops in Rome, the notion of 'church with a negro face' had become a pastoral expression of a great passion for the church in Africa. It was Cardinal Joseph-Albert Malula of Zaire (now Democratic Republic of Congo) who explained its meaning and objective: a church authentically negro-African, aware of her responsibilities and whose immediate objectives coincide with the explanation of the very notion of the local church.[752]

In presenting the vision of the church with a negro face, Malula underlined the double movements of fidelity to the universal church and to Africa. The bishops of Africa having opted for the 'theology of incarnation' (in place of the 'theology of adaptation') at

[747] Mulago, *Un visage africain du christianisme*, p. 185; Appiah-Kubi, *L'Église, Famille de Dieu*, p. 82.
[748] Mulago, *Un visage africain du christianisme*, p. 196; Appiah-Kubi, *L'Église, Famille de Dieu*, p. 82.
[749] Mulago, 'Naturalisme du christianisme en dehors de l'Occident, à la lumière de Vatican II', *EUNTES DOCETE* 20 (1967), pp. 241-62; Appiah-Kubi, *L'Église, Famille de Dieu*, pp. 82-3.
[750] Appiah-Kubi, *L'Église, Famille de Dieu*, pp. 82-3.
[751] *cf*. EIA 63.
[752] J. Malula, 'L'Église à l'heure de l'Africanité', *Église et Mission*, 196 (1974), pp. 13-21, cited in Appiah-Kubi, *L'Église, Famille de Dieu*, p. 83.

the 1974 Synod in Rome,[753] it was understandable that the project to build a church with a negro face would be founded on the mystery of the incarnation of Jesus Christ. This mystery is understood as ongoing; hence the church in Africa should reconsider itself in the light of the African's understanding of life, human and family values, as well as the values of community and solidarity.[754]

While the above-mentioned family and communal aspects of the church with a negro face would continue to inspire further reflections on how best to contextualize the ecclesiology of Vatican II, the expression 'with a negro face' would soon be dropped. This was probably due to the racial or derogatory connotation of the term 'negro'.

(c) The Church as Family of God

It seems it took over a decade after Vatican II for the theology of the church as *family of God* to emerge; apparently the practical experience of church as *family of God* preceded its theological elaboration. In the 1970s, the Catholic Church in some dioceses in East Africa employed the pastoral tool of Small Christian Communities (SCCs) as a way of experiencing the church as communion.[755] In West Africa, only the Catholic Church in Burkina Faso (formerly called Upper Volta) had made some appreciable nation-wide efforts to adopt the communion-oriented pastoral tool of SCCs.[756] And it is in the context of the experience of this pastoral praxis in Burkina Faso that the ecclesiology of *family of God* emerged long before the first African Synod. This is affirmed by Anselme T. Sanon, bishop of Bobo Dioulasso (Burkina Faso). After referring to the experience of the SCCs in his country, he states that the understanding of the church as *family of God* is 'the fruit of a

[753] *cf*. *AMECEA Documentation Services*, no. 11 (1974), p. 2; *cf*. A. Ngindu Mushete, *La teologia africana in cammino* (Bologna: Dehoniane, 1988), pp. 5-6.
[754] *cf*. Paul VI, *Africae terrarum*, 29 October 1967, in AAS 59 (1967), pp. 1073-97; *cf*. Appiah-Kubi, *L'Église, Famille de Dieu*, pp. 83-4.
[755] 'AMECEA Plenary 1976: Building Christian Communities', *AFER* 18 (1976), pp. 249-51.
[756] Subsection 2.4.3.

mature ecclesial awareness; it is a way of feeling oneself as a church, of being church, of making church and of living church entirely.'[757]

There were at least two determinant factors to the development of the African ecclesiology of *family of God* in Burkina Faso. The first of these factors was the crisis created by the decision of the then government to take over the mission schools. This occurred between 1964 and 1969, and it put a serious strain on the church-state relations. This crisis inspired among the lay faithful of Burkina Faso a heightened awareness of their ecclesial identity. Hence, they committed themselves more to deepen their belongingness to the life of the church in organising themselves into SCCs, where the participation of each one was appreciated and encouraged. Thus, the school crisis awoke among the laity a greater sense of responsibility and better participation in the building of the local church.[758]

Another contributing factor to the elaboration of the nature of church as *family of God* was the occasion for the celebration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Catholic Church in Burkina Faso in 1975. It constituted an important moment of reflection and a common search aimed at a better understanding of the mystery of the church. Thus, in 1976 a national Catholic survey was conducted. The major objective of this survey was to engender a new impetus for evangelisation in line with the apostolic exhortation of Paul VI's *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (1975) which strongly urged Catholics to take up the task of evangelizing the cultures of all peoples.[759] The outcome of the survey called for the understanding of the church as *family of God*. This is clearly stated in the 1977 Easter message of the bishops of Burkina Faso to their faithful:

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[757] A.T. Sanon, 'Église, Famille de Dieu. Nous sommes de la Famille de Dieu: voilà la Bonne nouvelle!', *Mission de l'Église,* 123 (1999), p. 63, cited in Appiah-Kubi, *L'Église, Famille de Dieu*, p. 90.
[758] Appiah-Kubi, *L'Église, Famille de Dieu*, p. 92; M. Wuestenberg, 'A Comparison between the SCCs of Burkina Faso with those of South Africa', *AFER*, 37 (1995), p. 181.
[759] Appiah-Kubi, *L'Église, Famille de Dieu*, p. 93.

> Among the most urgent priorities that you have pointed out to us, we retain the absolute necessity which imposes itself today to us, Christians of Upper Volta, to make of our church, a real *family* to the image of God and in taking inspiration from our best African traditions.... The people of God in Upper Volta, aware of the honour given to each of its members to freely share the divine life in Jesus Christ, commit itself henceforth to actualise at all the levels of its community the spirit and the structure of the church as *family of God* among men [and women]. We take inspiration for that matter from the early church and its positive values that the traditional African family offers us.[760]

Furthermore, the then archbishop of Ouagadougou, Cardinal Paul Zoungrana, would underscore the importance the Catholic Church in Burkina Faso attached to the model of church as *family of God* long before the first African Synod:

> The *family*, in the extended sense, with its horizontal dimension (link of all the brothers and sisters from the same blood relationship) and vertical dimension (attachment to the same ancestor) remains a pre-eminent image to which the African remains [deeply] attached. To rediscover the church as *family of God*, in which all are attached to the same origin: baptism of water and Spirit, having the common Ancestor: Jesus Christ, with the same life that animates the whole family, that of the Spirit of the Ancestor under the care of the same Father: to rediscover the *church as family*, is at the same time to link this church to the most authentic conceptions of our populations, to highlight the requirements of communal life, in making significant at the same time the evangelical transcendence which is and must be the originality of the *family of God* in relation to the human family.[761]

Once again, on the eve of the anniversary of their national independence in November 1977, the same Cardinal, addressing all Christians, would stress the solidarity, care for the vulnerable and other essential features of the *family of God*.[762]

Subsequently, at the 1985 Extraordinary Synod of Bishops in Rome, Bishop Sanon had the opportunity to speak about the church as *family of God*. However, being the synod which promoted the 'church as communion' for the whole Catholic world, it gave less attention to the model of *family of God*. Interestingly, the theology of the church as family of God would increasingly become the African option for contextualizing the conciliar ecclesiological model of communion. The work of the church in Burkina Faso, highlighted

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[760] *Message Pascal des Évêques de Haute-Volta* (1977), pp. 13-5, cited in Appiah-Kubi, *L'Église, Famille de Dieu*, p. 93.
[761] P. Zoungrana, 'La vie de l'Église en Afrique', *Fidélité et Renouveau*, 106 (1978), pp. 10-1; cited in Appiah-Kubi, *L'Église, Famille de Dieu*, p. 94.
[762] Zoungrana, 'La vie de l'Église en Afrique', p. 10; Appiah-Kubi, *L'Église, Famille de Dieu*, p. 94.

further by the works of Burkinabe theologians (e.g. Bishop Sanon and Jean-Marie Dabire Kusiele), would prepare the grounds for the prominence that the contextualized model of *family of God* would gain during and after the first African Synod.[763]

6.2.2 'Family of God' Model in the Preparation and Celebration of the First African Synod

The theme of the first African Synod (1994) was: 'The Church in Africa and Her Evangelizing Mission Towards the Year 2000: "You shall be my Witnesses" (Acts 1:8)'. Which ecclesiological model would then be the 'guiding idea for the evangelization of Africa' (EIA 63)? On the one hand, in line with the prevailing trend in post-conciliar Catholic ecclesiology, the 'guiding idea' of the *Lineamenta* (guidelines) for the first African Synod was that of the church as communion; on the other hand, the emerging African ecclesiological model (*family of God*) was absent therein. Happily, however, in the responses to the *Lineamenta*, the above emerging African ecclesiological model would appear many times. Thus, the *Instrumentum laboris* (working document) states:[764]

> In many answers to the *Lineamenta*, there is a *strong emphasis on the notion of the church as the family of God* among human beings. It is felt that Africans can be more easily enabled to experience and to live the mystery of the church as communion by utilising to good advantage the African's understanding of the family, especially as regards the values of family unity and solidarity.[765]

A year later the *Relatio ante disceptationem* (synod position paper), which was read at the beginning of the synod by Cardinal Hyacinthe Thiandoum,[766] also reiterated the strong emphasis on the model church-*family of God* in the responses to the *Lineamenta*:

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[763] Appiah-Kubi, *L'Église, Famille de Dieu*, pp. 92-101. For the critique of the model church-*family of God*, see subsections 6.2.2, 6.2.3, 6.4.

[764] This document, which was promulgated John Paul II on 9 February 1993, in Kampala, is a synthesis of the responses to the *Lineamenta*: First African Synod, *Instrumentum Laboris*, no. 5, http://www.AFRICANSYNOD13_speciale-africa-1994_instrumentum-laboris.htm (accessed on 12 July 2013).

[765] First African Synod, *Instrumentum Laboris*, no. 25.

[766] Cardinal Hyacinthe Thiandoum was appointed as the *Relator General* of the Synod by John Paul II.

> A particularly striking and relevant image of what evangelisation is all about is to see it as a building up the *family of God* on earth. This concept, so often evoked in the responses to the *Lineamenta*, has deep roots in our African culture. It also expresses the profound Christian and African values of communion, fraternity, solidarity and peace. For in a truly African family, joys, difficulties and trials are shared in a trusting dialogue. Since the whole of humanity is in a sense God's family, this image also opens evangelisation out to its universal dimensions: welcoming all peoples and each person into this great family, as a conscious member or as one moved by the Spirit.[767]

One could, therefore, say that the understanding of the church as *family of God* emerged at the threshold of the first African Synod as a most appropriate way of contextualizing the communion model of the church; and this was so thanks to pioneering work of the church in Burkina Faso. Consequently, the model church-*family of God* would appear in several of the interventions during the synod. Let us look at some of these interventions, beginning with those which, though did not explicitly mention this model, did refer to the Small Christian Communities (SCCs), a major determining factor for the birth of the familial model, as a most appropriate way for contextualizing the communion-based ecclesiology of Vatican II.[768]

Referring to the main synodal theme of evangelization, Kiwanuka Denis, bishop of Kotido (Uganda) mentioned the SCCs, as experienced in Africa especially in the Association of Member Episcopal Conferences of East Africa (AMECEA) region, as an effective pastoral tool for enhancing the evangelizing mission of the church. He then went on to state that the SCCs originated from the conciliar ecclesiology of communion: 'They sprang up as a result of a new insight into the understanding of the nature of the church as communion, a word that has become a key concept in ecclesiology especially after the Second Vatican Council.'[769] Zacchaeus Okoth, archbishop of Kisumu (Kenya) would also corroborate the above point: the SCCs 'help implement the ecclesiology of communion so

[767] *Relatio ante disceptationem*, no. 3, http://www.afrikaworld.net/synod/thiandoum1.htm (accessed on 12 July 2013).
[768] *cf*. A. Shorter, 'Evangelization and Culture', *AFER*, 37 (1995), p. 104.
[769] K. Denis, 'Intervention', http://www.afrikaworld.net/synod/denis.htm (accessed on 12 July 2013).

much cherished by the Constitution *Lumen gentium* of the Second Vatican Council.'[770] Consequently, speaking on the synodal topic of 'inculturation' (which we prefer to call 'contextualization'), the archbishop of Kisumu re-echoed the views of many Africans who saw the SCCs as a practical way of experiencing 'church as communion' in the African context:[771]

> The experience of [SCCs], according to many of the responses given in preparation for the Synod, shows that they offer a way of being a Christian which is very much in consonance with the communitarian value of African cultures. Since they take the social neighbourhood as a human cell of the church, they are built on the natural and spontaneous social network which characterises the African way of life.[772]

Some synod fathers went a step further to express the link between the SCCs and the model church-*family of God*. The bishop of Diebougou (Burkina Faso), Jean-Baptiste Somé, for instance, did so while providing a brief historical background: 'In the dioceses of Burkina [Faso] and Niger they have been experiencing for a long time something very interesting, especially since 1977, a date when bishops made a fundamental option for a family-church: …well-structured in a "basic Christian community", the family-church becomes the place of different commitments on the part of lay faithful in the name of the faith.'[773]

Other synod fathers whose interventions explicitly touched on the *family of God* model included Anselme T. Sanon, bishop of Bobo-Dioulasso (Burkina Faso), Jean-Noel Diouf, bishop of Tambacounda (Senegal), Lucien Monsi-Agboka, bishop of Abomey (Benin), and Albert K. Obiefuna, bishop of Awka (Nigeria). Here, we wish to limit ourselves to the contributions of Sanon, a key proponent of the model church-*family of God*,

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[770] Z. Okoth, 'Intervention', http://www.afrikaworld.net/synod/okoth.htm (accessed on 12 July 2013).
[771] *cf*. J.G. Healey, 'Church-as-Family and SCCs: Themes from the African Synod', *AFER*, 37 (1995), pp. 45-6.
[772] Okoth, 'Intervention'.
[773] J.-B. Somé, 'Intervention', http://www.afrikaworld.net/synod/some.htm (accessed on 12 July 2013); *cf*. Orobator, 'A Church in Dialogue', pp. 44-50.

and of Obiefuna, who though saw the importance of this model, called attention to the negative aspects of the African understanding of family.

More clearly than his compatriot (Somé), Sanon connected the triads of 'church as communion', SCCs and 'church as family of God'. He explicitly saw the 'church as family of God' as a contextualization of the communion model in Africa: 'The church in Burkina Faso and the other churches in Africa have translated this [church as communion] according to their socio-religious experience under the titles: church-family, church-fraternity.' Furthermore, he said that the experience of the church as communion or family is lived in a special way in the SCCs: 'We live the tradition of the church-communion, the church-family, the church-fraternity under the form of' SCCs. The church perceived as *family of God*, Sanon clarified, 'is the same church born of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.' It is therefore 'the icon of the Trinity'.[774]

Sanon, then, went on to suggest some areas where this African ecclesiological model might need further theological elaborations: the Holy Trinity as a family by analogy; Jesus Christ as founder of our faith; the Bible as word of alliance of the divine family with the human family which it creates and saves; the Apostolic College as made up of the elders, witnesses and guarantors of the family tradition; communion with the successor of Peter, the elder of the witnesses; and communion among churches.[775]

On his part, Obiefuna noted that, while the African concept of family might be an apt idea for contextualization and could aid a better reception of the communion model of the church, we should not overlook the negative tendencies associated with it. He stressed, in particular, the need to address the negativity of ethnocentrism:

[774] A.T. Sanon, 'Intervention', http://www.afrikaworld.net/synod/sanon.htm (accessed on 12 July 2013).
[775] Sanon, 'Intervention'.

> The church is indeed a family. Its boundaries extend beyond the clan and the tribe. The typical African even if he or she be a Catholic does not consider that. Indeed the African Christian with his exaggerated ethnicism find it difficult to accept the truth that the man or woman in India who is a Christian is much more a brother or sister than the non-Christian brother or sister in the natural family (*cf*. Gal. 5:10).
>
> This mentality is so pervading that the saying goes among the Africans that when it comes to the crunch, it is not the Christian concept of the church as a family which prevails but rather the adage that '*blood is thicker than water'*. And by water here one can presumably include the waters of baptism through which one is born into the family of the church. Blood relationship is more important even for the African who has become a Christian.[776]

It is, therefore, understandable that when eventually the fathers of the first African Synod endorsed the 'church as family of God' as key to the contextualization of the conciliar communion-based ecclesiology and hence for its better reception, they also indicated the need for the African concept of family to be purged of its negative tendencies in the light of the gospel of Christ.[777] This dual concern is echoed in the summary of position (*Relatio post disceptationem*) which was read by Cardinal Thiandoum at the end of the synod:

> The African sense of family solidarity affords a valuable base on which to build an ecclesiology of the church as the 'family of God' on earth. In this ecclesiology, Living Christian Communities form cells within which love of God is inseparable from love of neighbour, and in which the tendencies to disunity - egoism, tribalism... - are discerned and overcome. These communities will take up questions related to marriage … the emergence of 'new ministries' for the laity and the exigency of communities that are self-relying and self-propagating within the communion and solidarity of the churches.[778]

Furthermore, at the end of the synod, the fathers adopted a synodal *Propositio*, a text of sixty-four propositions on the various topics they deliberated on. This was a major

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[776] A.K. Obiefuna, 'Intervention', http://www.afrikaworld.net/synod/obiefuna.htm (accessed on 12 July 2013); *cf*. Orobator, 'A Church in Dialogue', pp. 36-7. We share in Appiah-Kubi's criticism of Obiefuna's interpretation of the above African adage. Among other things, Appiah-Kubi states: 'it is erroneous to conceive baptism only by the rite of water without underlining the fact that the baptised Christian is at the same time redeemed by the blood poured on the cross' (Appiah-Kubi, *L'Église, Famille de Dieu*, pp. 109-10). From the Christian perspective, therefore, one could say that the blood of Christ binds all the baptized (whatever be their race or ethnicity) into one family of God.

[777] *Propositio* no.8; EIA 63. Apart from the calls to purge and transform the African concept of family in the process of contextualization, we did not find any intervention(s) at the Synod objecting to the ecclesiology of *family of God*.

[778] *Relatio post disceptationem*, http://www.afrikaworld.net/synod/thiandoum3.htm (accessed on 12 July 2013).

source document for John Paul II's Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, *Ecclesia in Africa*. Making reference to *Propositio* no.8, the pope re-echoed the thoughts of the synod fathers:

> Not only did the synod speak of inculturation, but it also made use of it, taking the *church* as *God's family* as its guiding *idea* for the evangelisation of Africa [*cf.* LG 6]. The synod fathers acknowledged it as an expression of the church's nature particularly appropriate for Africa. For this *image* emphasises care for others, solidarity, warmth in human relationships, acceptance, dialogue and trust. The new evangelisation will thus aim at *building up the church as family*, avoiding all ethnocentrism and excessive particularism, trying instead to encourage reconciliation and true communion between different ethnic groups, favouring solidarity and the sharing of personnel and resources among the particular churches, without undue ethnic considerations.[779]

In receiving and recommending to the whole Catholic Church in Africa the model of *family of God* which emerged from the ecclesial or pastoral experiences of Catholics (particularly in Burkina Faso), we have what Gaillardetz would refer to as a 'first moment' of reception by the bishops of Africa and John Paul II.[780] Having given their blessing to the legitimacy of the model church-*family of God*, and indicated the need to purify the African notion of family in the light of the gospel, the bishops of Africa and the pope charged African theologians to take up the task of articulating a contextualized ecclesiology.[781] In what follows, therefore, we consider the extent of a 'second moment'[782] of reception in the works of some African theologians and in the Catholic Church in Ghana.[783]

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[779] EIA 63. The terms 'idea' and 'image' rather the term 'model' are employed in *Ecclesia in Africa* to refer to 'church as family of God'.
[780] Sections 2.2 and 2.4.4; *cf.* J. Carreño, 'A Truly African Church' in McGarry (ed.), *What Happened at the African Synod*, p. 51.
[781] EIA 63.
[782] Once again we are using Gaillardetz's concept (*cf.* section 2.2).
[783] Besides African scholars, the continental episcopal body, Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar (SECAM), with the aid of the national conferences, has also researched further into the ecclesiology of *family of God* and written on it. See the publications: SECAM, *The Church as Family of God: Instrumentum Laboris – Pastoral Letter* (Accra: SECAM, 1998); and SECAM, *'Christ our Peace' (Eph. 2:14): The Church as Family of God, Place and Sacrament of Pardon, Reconciliation and Peace in Africa: Pastoral Letter* (Accra: SECAM, 2001). Furthermore, continuing the work of the first African Synod, the *second* African Synod, which was convoked by Pope Benedict XVI and held in Rome, from 4 to 25 October, 2009, would reflect on the topic of the church's service to reconciliation, justice and peace in the light of the ecclesiology of *family of God*. The *Lineamenta* dedicated chapter 3, section 1 and the *Instrumentum Laboris* dedicated chapters 3 and 4 to the topic of church as family of God. And in his Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation*, Africae munus, The Church in Africa in Service to Reconciliation, Justice and Peace: 'You are the salt of the earth …You are the light of the world' (Mt. 5:13-14)*, 19 November 2011, Benedict XVI states

6.2.3 'Family of God' Model in Some Theological Works since First African Synod

In view of the numerous works on the theology of church as *family of God* since the first African Synod,[784] and in line with our intention to focus on the reception of this contextualized ecclesiology in the Catholic Church in Ghana, this subsection presents mainly the works of four Ghanaian Catholic priest-scholars: Edward B. Tengan, Francis Appiah-Kubi, Gerald K. Tanye and Moses A. Awinongya.[785] However, in order to provide for an aspect of the ecclesiology of *family of God* which has been overlooked by these Ghanaian scholars, this subsection concludes with a brief consideration of the works of Pius Benson and Cornelius Hankomoone.

(a) Tengan: *Church as House of God*

Tengan is the earliest among these scholars to attempt to develop a theology of the church as *family of God*.[786] He prefaces his work with a critical examination of the ecclesiological works of some African theologians who had preceded him, particularly those of John M. Waliggo,[787] Bénézet Bujo[788] and Charles Nyamiti[789]. Tengan observes

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the continuity of the second synod with the first one, and he makes references to the model church-*family of God* (nos 2-3, 7-8).

[784] The numerous theological works on 'church as family of God' include the following: J. Healey, 'Church-as-Family and SCCs: Themes from the African Synod', *AFER* 37 (1995), pp. 44-8; A.G. Msafiri, 'The Church as Family Model: Its Strengths and Weaknesses', *AFER* 40 (1998), pp. 302-19; B. Kiriswa, 'African Model of Church as Family: Implications on Ministry and Leadership', *AFER* 43 (2001), pp. 99-108; the papers of a symposium with contributions by C. Nyamiti, L. Magesa, C. Mhagama, A.P. Zani and D. Kyeyune have been published in P. Ryan (ed.), *The Model of 'Church-as-Family': Meeting the African Challenge* (Nairobi: CUEA, 1999); N. Fogliacco, 'The Family: An African Metaphor for Trinity and Church', and C. Mhagama, 'Pauline Churches as God's Family: A Search from the Roots' in C. McGarry & P. Ryan (eds), *Inculturating the Church in Africa: Theological and Practical Perspectives* (Nairobi: Paulines, 2001), pp. 120-58, 183-91; J. Nyenyembe, *Fraternity in Christ: Building the Church as Family* (Nairobi: Paulines, 2005).

[785] We are not aware of any Ghanaian Catholic scholar writing on the church as *family of God* prior to the first African Synod.

[786] Tengan's first work on this subject was published in the very year the Catholic Church in Ghana held its first National Pastoral Congress [Tengan, *House of God: Church-as-Family from an African Perspective* (Leuven: Acco, 1997)].

[787] J.M. Waliggo, 'The African Clan as the True Model of the African Church' in Mugambi et al (eds), *The Church in African Christianity*, pp. 111-28.

[788] B. Bujo, 'On the Road Toward an African Ecclesiology: Reflections on the Synod' in *The African Synod: Documents, Reflections, Perspectives*, compiled by African Faith and Justice Network, Maura Browne (dir.) (New York: 1996), pp. 139-51.

that common to the contextualized ecclesiologies of these three theologians is the attempt to comprehend the mystery of the church by employing the African concept of the extended family with, particularly, its value of community solidarity of the living and the dead. In this respect he says that Bujo and Nyamiti 'go much further than Waliggo and can be said to present different ecclesiologies which can be seen as complementing one another.' On the methodological level, the two complement each other for while Nyamiti 'takes a more existentialist and deductive approach to build a *koinōnia*-ecclesiology, Bujo develops a meal of life/eucharistic-ecclesiology from a more experiential approach.'[790]

However, Tengan says that the interpretations by Bujo and Nyamiti of the image of the ancestor and how they are 'applicable to Jesus is irreconcilable. Whilst Bujo's notion of Christ as Proto-ancestor rejects any biological link of Jesus with the human members of the family, Nyamiti sees Jesus as the new Adam and thereby emphasizes his human link with our ancestors.'[791] Furthermore, he notes that a fundamental question arises here: 'How can one, in using this image, maintain the unicity of the person of Jesus in relation to the other ancestors and in consequence, the saints as ancestors of faith?'[792] In this light, Tengan observes that by identifying Jesus with the human ancestor figure, Nyamiti commits the error of identifying the transcendental reality with an image, forgetting the analogical nature of the latter. Consequently, he is inclined to agree with Bujo and see Jesus Christ as Proto-ancestor in which case the relationship is not natural but spiritual.[793] However, Tengan seems to abandon the notion of Christ as Proto-ancestor when he employs the concept of

[789] C. Nyamiti, 'The Church as Christ's Ancestral Mediation: An Essay on African Ecclesiology' in Mugambi et al (eds), *The Church in African Christianity*, pp. 129-77.
[790] Tengan, *House of God: Church-as-Family*, p. 33.
[791] Tengan, *House of God*, p. 34.
[792] Tengan, *House of God*, p. 34.
[793] Tengan, *House of God*, p. 35.

'family' of the *Dagara*[794] people of Upper West Region (Ghana) and of southern Burkina Faso in his ecclesiology.

Before considering the *Dagara* concept of 'family', Tengan examines the senses in which the term (family) has been used in Vatican II's *Gaudium et spes*, John Paul II's *Familiaris consortio* and *Ecclesia in Africa*.[795] He observes that, generally, in the first two documents the term is used in the sense of a 'nuclear family' of father, mother and children; whereas, in the third document, the term is used in the two senses of 'nuclear family' and 'extended family'.[796] He then explains that though 'the English word *family* has no equivalent in the *Dagara* language', the social aggregation of human relations of a common origin obviously exists, and it is understood in the 'extended' sense: 'The social unit based on parenthood and filiation is *yir*, a term used to designate both the physical house and the social house at its various levels.'[797] He explains further: 'The primary meaning of house is social. One's house identifies the web of social relationships established by paternity and filiation. This all-encompassing social house is the *yir* or *yiilu*. Only by extension does it refer to the physical house or habitat.'[798] Being a people whose lineage/clan structure is patrilineal, Tengan refers to the *yiilu* or *yir* as 'patri-house'.

What unites the 'extended family' at the broadest level of *yiilu* is a common *kyiiru* – a non-human member of the family, invariably an animal that is believed to have saved the ancestors from a danger in time past. Another term used for the *kyiiru* (as saviour and sibling) of the patrilineage is *dume*. Furthermore, the hunting of the animal which is

[794] The *Dagara* are sometimes referred to as *Dagaaba*; their language is called *Dagaare*.
[795] Tengan, *House of God*, pp. 38-45; *Gaudium et spes*, nos 47-52; John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation, *Familiaris consortio*, 22 November 1982, nos 12-27, 50; EIA 43, 50, 63, 80-5, 92.
[796] Tengan, *House of God*, pp. 41, 44.
[797] Tengan, 'The Family Model in Ecclesiology–An Example from Ghana' in A.J. Gittins (ed.), *Life and Death Matters: The Practice of Inculturation in Africa*, Studia Insituti Missiologici SVD, 72 (2000), p. 45; Tengan, *House of God*, pp. 45-51.
[798] Tengan, 'The Family Model in Ecclesiology', pp. 46-7; *House of God,* pp. 45-6.

considered as *kyiiru*/*dume* (totem) or the eating of its meat is prohibited to members of the family; and this prohibition/injunction is referred to only as *kyiiru* (but not as *dume*).[799]

How then does Tengan use his anthropological reflections for a contextualized ecclesiology? First, his christological consideration: concurring with Fabian N. Dapila that for the *Dagaaba*, 'Jesus is not the ancestor. Jesus remains Jesus and the ancestors remain ancestors',[800] Tengan seeks another christological image in the *yiilu*. That is, by analogy, he sees the church as a great house (family) of God, with Jesus Christ, our redeemer and brother, who is both divine and human, as the Christian *dume*. 'In his teachings and exemplary life, Jesus communicates to the members of the house the injunctions (*kyiiru*) they have to live by in order to have fullness of life and to maintain the house in perpetuity.'[801]

Furthermore, Tengan uses the various interconnected levels of the *yiilu* to articulate the church as a community of communities or a communion of communions:[802]

> In its internal arrangement, the patri-house can be defined as a communion of communions at four distinctive levels. These include the broadest designation of the *yiilu*, identified by the common *kyiiru*, the *yir* as the locus of ritual and communal celebrations, the *logr* as the unit of production and consumption identified by the same granary and the *die* as the nuptial room of the couple. In our view, this family model can be adequately used to reflect the relationship between the universal church and the local church at its varied levels of the diocese, parish and basic Christian communities.[803]

Tengan goes on to elaborate on lessons that could be drawn from the *Dagara* concept of 'family' for the church as house (family) of God in the areas of communal life

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[799] Tengan, 'The Family Model in Ecclesiology', pp. 46-7; *House of God,* pp. 46-7.
[800] F.N. Dapila, 'The Importance of the Dagaaba Ancestors and Their Role in the Process of Inculturation', *Mission*, 3 (1996), p. 108; Tengan, *House of God*, p. 37.
[801] Tengan, 'the Family Model in Ecclesiology', pp. 50-1; *House of God*, pp. 80-4.
[802] Tillard is fond of expressing the nature of the church as communion of communions and community of communities (*cf.* subsection 2.5.4c).
[803] Tengan, 'The Church-as-Family: An Ecclesiology of Communion from an African Perspective' in E. Babissagana & K. Nsapo (eds), *Qu' as-tu fait de ton frère? Mélanges en l'honneur de Mgr. Jan Dumon* (Kinshasa: Universitaires Africaines, 2012), p. 440; Tengan, 'The Family Model in Ecclesiology', p. 48; Tengan, *House of God*, pp. 85-93.

and solidarity, family celebrations (as sacramental life), family leadership (based on the 'palaver model'), communion of saints, and living in view of the eschatological kingdom. Finally, acknowledging that he has focused on the positive values of the Dagara house, he mentions some of the negative familial values that need to be purified and transformed. These include an understanding of 'family' which marginalizes women; the concept of marriage in which the bride-price justifies the inferior position of women, and the exclusivity of concept of traditional solidarity and communal life.[804]

Before looking at the work of the second Ghanaian scholar, we wish to make a few critical observations of Tengan's contribution towards understanding the church as family of God. Firstly, his work affirms the fact that the numerous cultural differences in Africa make it difficult to speak of one African culture. Secondly his work affirms that a properly contextualized model church-*family of God* must address those values that are incompatible with the gospel of Christ. On the other hand, the first point we wish to mention as an apparent demerit of his work is that he seems to be constructing his ecclesiology on the assertion of Nyamiti that 'African ecclesiology presupposes African christology'.[805] In doing so, his ecclesiology seems to be more christo-centric than trinitarian in character as the conciliar ecclesiology would warrant it; the roles of the God the Father and the Holy Spirit do not appear to have been adequately accounted for in his analogy of the *house of God*. A final point is that though Tengan reviews the use of models and their complementarity, his ecclesiology does not seem to be concerned about how the familial model of the church is complemented by the other models.

[804] Tengan, *House of God*, pp. 107-11; *cf.* Orobator, 'A Church in Dialogue', pp. 35-7.
[805] Nyamiti, 'The Church as Christ's Ancestral Mediation', p. 129; Tengan, *House of God*, p. 22.

(b) Appiah-Kubi: *L'Église, Famille de Dieu*[806]

Among the four Ghanaian scholars we are considering, it is the work of F. Appiah-Kubi which chronologically follows that of Tengan. However, the work of the former makes no reference to the latter's. Nonetheless, Appiah-Kubi provides an adequate theological foundation for the model church-*family of God* by making references to scriptures and tracing its emergence in and development from Vatican II to the first African Synod and beyond.[807] In doing so, he says that his objective is not to prove the validity of the use of the image of 'family' in ecclesiology, but rather to demonstrate its consonance with other images[808] of the church and with the African worldview.[809]

Unlike Tengan, Appiah-Kubi does not focus on a specific African or Ghanaian concept of family; instead he employs a generalized African concept of family. While aware of the limitation of using an abstract concept of family, this approach enables him to avoid the pitfall of reducing theological expression to a mere reflection determined by the limitations of a specific culture or context – in which case the theological endeavor loses its critical edge as it becomes a product of its surrounding.[810]

Furthermore, more clearly than Tengan, Appiah-Kubi rightly traces the African origin of the ecclesiology of *family of God* to the pastoral experiences and theological initiatives of the Catholic Church in Burkina Faso.[811] Consequently by examining, for

[806] This French title means: 'The Church, Family of God'.
[807] Appiah-Kubi examines in depth the emergence and development of the description of the church as family in the debates of Vatican II and its final appearance in some of its documents (e.g. *Lumen gentium,* nos 6, 28, 32, 51; *Gaudium et spes*, nos 32, 40, 42-3, 59, 92*; Apostolicam actuositatem*, no. 8) [Appiah-Kubi, *L'Église, Famille de Dieu*, pp. 25-49].
[808] Appiah-Kubi uses the term 'image' as employed in EIA 63, instead of the term 'model'; and in other places, he does not seem to make a distinction between the two terms (*cf*. Appiah-Kubi, *L'Église, Famille de Dieu*, pp. 79-85, 121-4).
[809] Appiah-Kubi, *L'Église, Famille de Dieu*, pp. 20, 22-77.
[810] Appiah-Kubi, *L'Église, Famille de Dieu*, pp. 10-2, 16-7.
[811] Appiah-Kubi, *L'Église, Famille de Dieu*, pp. 92-8.

instance, the work of the Burkinabe theologian, Dabire Kusiele,[812] who delineates the trinitarian feature of the church as *family of God*, Appiah-Kubi more explicitly (than Tengan) elaborates on this indispensable character of the church.[813] In the light of scriptures and in consonance with Vatican II, he notes that the church originates from the Holy Trinity and it is patterned on the 'familial' communion of the love of the triune God.[814]

The church as *family of God* is, according to Appiah-Kubi, founded on the paternity-filiation-fraternity relationships. Firstly, God the Father is the *unique* divine Father of the church as family. Secondly, we are called into this *family of God* thanks to the incarnation, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. And thirdly, through the work of the Holy Spirit, we respond to God's invitation by faith and we are initiated as adopted children of God (filiation). Thus, we become members of the *family of God*, and therefore, brothers and sisters of Christ and with one another (fraternity).[815]

He then goes on to affirm that the *family of God* differs from all other families. It is the family of families which transcends the sphere of blood relations. In this sense, there is a breaking open of clan boundaries, so that those who have been addressed sociologically as brothers and sisters are able to become, in Christ and through the Holy Spirit, newly related as brothers and sisters among themselves and with others outside the boundaries of their clan.[816]

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[812] J.-M. Dabire Kusiele, 'Église-famille de Dieu: Approche théologico-doctrinale et pastorale' in *Foi, culture et évangélisation à l'aube du troisième millénaire*, *Actes du spécial colloque post-synodal, Abidjan, 18-20 avril, 1996, RICAO*, 14-5 (1996), pp. 81-119.
[813] Appiah-Kubi, *L'Église, Famille de Dieu,* pp. 97-9.
[814] Appiah-Kubi, *L'Église, Famille de Dieu*, pp. 164-7, 199.
[815] Appiah-Kubi, *L'Église, Famille de Dieu*, pp. 200-9.
[816] Appiah-Kubi, *L'Église, Famille de Dieu*, pp. 192-4.

However, like many theological works, that of Appiah-Kubi has its limitation. Though he states that his objectives include demonstrating the consonance the model church-*family of God* has with other models, he simply mentions the fact that all the models are complementary and he substantiates this by references to the works of Rigal, Kasper and Dulles, among others.[817] He does not, however, show how the models complement each other.

(c) Tanye: *Church as Family and Ethnocentrism*

Of the two Ghanaian scholars who preceded him, Tanye seems to be aware of only the work of Tengan. However, unlike Tengan but rather like Appiah-Kubi, Tanye employs a generalized African concept of family in view of treating the issue of ethnocentrism in Sub-Saharan Africa.[818] Secondly quite like Appiah-Kubi, Tanye makes an elaborate presentation on the biblical foundation of the theology of the church as *family of God* and concludes: 'all believers in Jesus Christ have a common father, namely, God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Through Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, we share in the nature of God in a real way and can truly call God: *Abba*, Father. We are united in the blood and Spirit of Christ in a common brotherhood and sisterhood which transcends all human blood-ties or ethnic affiliations.'[819]

Furthermore, though Tanye mentions the trinitarian nature of the church as *family of God,* his work (like that of Tengan) is more christo-centric.[820] This notwithstanding, while Tengan abandons (and Appiah-Kubi avoids) perceiving Christ as 'Ancestor' or 'Proto-

[817] Appiah-Kubi, *L'Église, Famille de Dieu*, pp. 116-20.
[818] G.K. Tanye, *The Church-as-Family and Ethnocentrism in Sub-Saharan Africa* (Münster: LIT, 2010), pp. 15-44.
[819] Tanye, *The Church-as-Family and Ethnocentrism*, p. 195. As regards tracing the notion of 'family of God' in the New Testament, firstly, Tanye (pp. 171-8), Appiah-Kubi (pp. 133-67) and Awinongya (pp. 74-83) consider the synoptic gospels; secondly, whereas the Tanye (pp. 178-90) and Awinongya (pp. 84-9) focus on the Pauline literature, the Appiah-Kubi (pp. 169-92) focuses on the johannine literature.
[820] Unlike Appiah-Kubi who elaborates on the pneumatological aspect of the 'church as family of God', Tanye simply mentions the Holy Spirit in a few places.

ancestor', Tanye considers this as the christological basis of his ecclesiology of *family of God*. To support this Tanye cites Nyamiti, the very person whose position Tengan criticizes (*cf.* subsection 6.2.3a).[821] We agree with Tengan that there is a difficulty associated with applying the figure of 'ancestor' to Christ.

Among the four Ghanaian scholars, Tanye's specific contribution is in addressing the issue of ethnocentrism. On the level of theory, he says that this could be overcome if the transcendence of the church as *family of God* over all natural families, clans, tribes, nations and races is well assimilated.[822] On the practical level, he considers how various approaches to conflict resolution and reconciliation (including the instruments of mediation and dialogue) could be employed.[823]

Finally, besides some of the demerits identified already in his work, one observes that Tanye does not seem to place the model of *family of God* within the purview of the 'mosaic' ecclesiology of Vatican II. Consequently, it seems to escape him that the familial model of the church is just one of several models that are complementary in nature.

(d) Awinongya: *Family in Ghana as a Challenge for a Contextual Ecclesiology*

Among the works of the four Ghanaian scholars being considered that of Awinongya is the most recent. He makes use of the work of Tengan, but he does not depict an awareness of the works of Appiah-Kubi and Tanye. He seeks to use the Ghanaian concept of family as a basis for contextual ecclesiology. In this regard, unlike Appiah-Kubi and Tanye who use a generalized African concept of family, he uses a Ghanaian concept. However, the concept of family that he employs is broader than that of Tengan: while the latter focuses on the *Dagara* concept of family, the former examines the understanding of

[821] Tanye, *The Church-as-Family and Ethnocentrism*, pp, 210, 233-5.
[822] Tanye, *The Church-as-Family and Ethnocentrism*, pp. 195-7.
[823] Tanye, *The Church-as-Family and Ethnocentrism*, pp. 361-422.

the family among the *Dagara* and *Frafra* (both of the northern part of Ghana) and the *Akans*, *Ga-Adangbes* and *Ewes* (of southern Ghana).[824]

Secondly quite like Appiah-Kubi and Tanye, Awinongya elaborates on the biblical foundation of the theology of the church as *family of God*.[825] Moreover, among the four Ghanaian scholars, he is the only one who presents the contributions of some church fathers to the understanding of the church as *family of God*. He focuses on two of the fathers of the early North African Church, namely, Tertullian and Cyprian. He says that Tertullian, in his treatise on the *Our Father*, perceives God not only as Father of Jesus but also of all Christians. Awinongya continues: the understanding 'of the church as family got a new flavour in this treatise through the introduction of the term *church as mother*. Tertullian is of the view that in the Father and the Son, the mother, here the church, is also recognized.'[826] The relationship among Christians for Tertullian, therefore, is that of a true fraternity based on a common baptism and expressed in love and solidarity.[827] Awinongya notes that Cyprian would also elaborate on the understanding of the church based on the concept of family. However, in the context of the third century Decian persecution of Christians, Cyprian gave a restrictive view on the composition of the fraternity of the church, holding that only those who come from the same mother (the church) are true brethren.[828]

Then comes Awinongya's approach of contextualization. He summarizes it as follows: 'in the discourse ecclesiology negotiates with sociology and anthropology; a theological concept, church, engages itself in a trade-off with a sociological term in a

[824] Awinongya, *The Understanding of Family in Ghana*, pp. 39-65.
[825] Awinongya, *The Understanding of Family in Ghana*, pp. 68-89.
[826] Awinongya, *The Understanding of Family in Ghana*, p. 90; Tertullian, *De Oratione*, 2:5-7.
[827] Awinongya, *The Understanding of Family in Ghana*, p. 91; Tertullian, *Apologeticus*, 39:8-11.
[828] Awinongya, *The Understanding of Family in Ghana*, pp. 91-5; Cyprian, *Treatise* VI (on *Our Father*), 10; *Epistle* 2, 59.

mutual interpretation of values.'[829] On the one hand, like the other Ghanaian authors, he upholds the transforming power of the gospel over culture and therefore over the socio-anthropological concept of family.[830] On the other hand, his stated approach of 'mutual interpretation' seems to place the value of the gospel and that of culture at par.

Furthermore, he considers the mystery of the triune God as the foundation of the church understood as *family of God*. In this respect, like Appiah-Kubi and Tanye, Awinongya stresses that the 'fatherhood' of the church as *family of God* belongs to God. However, unlike the Tangen and Appiah-Kubi, but rather like Tanye, he employs the Ghanaian anthropological figure of ancestor to articulate the christological basis of the church.[831] In addition, by apparently limiting himself to the elements that an anthropological reality could provide, Awinongya (like Tengan and Tanye), does not give adequate attention to the pneumatological feature of the church.

The above notwithstanding Awinongya, like all the others, holds that despite the disvalues of the Ghanaian concept of family,[832] its positive values provide a good basis for understanding the nature of the church.[833] Thus, 'the church-as-family and the natural family stand for the gift and promotion of life. They both reach out to other institutions in society and are interrelated. Since they are set out to serve others, they should well bring out the communicative and communion aspects of all human society.'[834] Furthermore, like all the others, he holds that the church could be perceived as a 'family of families'.[835] Finally, though he sees the various models of the church as complementary, he does not demonstrate how.

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[829] Awinongya, *The Understanding of Family in Ghana*, pp. 10, 186-8.
[830] Awinongya *The Understanding of Family in Ghana*, pp. 153-8.
[831] Awinongya, *The Understanding of Family in Ghana*, pp. 161, 170, 187.
[832] Awinongya, *The Understanding of Family in Ghana*, pp. 188-90.
[833] Awinongya, *The Understanding of Family in Ghana*, pp. 163-78.
[834] Awinongya, *The Understanding of Family in Ghana*, p. 188.
[835] Awinongya, *The Understanding of Family in Ghana*, p. 163.

(e) Benson and Hankoome

None of the above Ghanaian scholars has demonstrated how the model church-*family of God* could be complemented by the other models of the church. There are, however, a few African theologians who articulate the complementarity between the model church-*family of God* and other models of the church. Benson, for instance, explicitly articulates how the *family of God* model is complemented by the institutional model.[836] He, however, does not explicitly consider how the African model is complemented by the models of discipleship, sacrament, herald and servant, though he makes a detailed presentation of all the six models of Dulles in his studies.[837] Hankomoone moves a step further than Benson by presenting the church as *family of God* in the light of the six models of Dulles.[838]

However, none of these scholars articulates the mutual complementarity (symbiotic relationships) of the models in the harmonization process (as outlined in chapter four of this study). Therefore, our process of harmonization of the models in the next chapter incorporates the 'symbiotic relationships' between the model church-*family of God* and Dulles' models.

6.3 Reception of 'Family of God' Model by the Catholic Church in Ghana

6.3.1 Prior to the First African Synod

Prior to the first African Synod, the degree of reception (in theory and practice) of the communion ecclesiology of Vatican II in the Catholic Church in Ghana was not as

[836] P. Benson, *The Church in the Theological Writings of Avery Dulles: Impulses for African Ecclesiology* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2007), pp. 306-14.
[837] Benson, *The Church in the Theological Writings of Avery Dulles*, pp. 17-73.
[838] C. Hankomoone, 'Church as Family of God: An African Expression of Ecclesial Communion and Mission', Ph.D. thesis (Pontificia Universitas Gregoriana, Roma 2009), pp. 77, 82-3.

appreciable as was the case in the neighbouring country of Burkina Faso.[839] In the first place, there was no explicit theology on the church as *family of God* in the local church (Ghana). None of the pastoral letters, communiques and memoranda issued between 1968 and 1993 by the bishops as a national conference seems to have explicitly presented the church as a *family of God*.[840] However, conciliar expressions, which could all be assumed under the model of the church as communion, were occasionally found in the above messages of the bishops: 'people of God'[841], 'body of Christ'[842] and community[843]. Moreover, there were a few glimpses of perceiving the church as *family* (but not specifically as 'family *of God'*) in the local church prior to the African Synod.[844] For instance, in the first synod (1984)[845] of the then Kumasi Diocese, which adopted a pastoral vision of making the diocese 'a true faith community',[846] there were references to the church as family: 'the diocese, through the gentle action of the Holy Spirit, has become in many ways a true *family*'.[847] And in the decree for the promulgation of the diocesan synodal acts and declarations, the then bishop of Kumasi, Peter K. Sarpong, referred to Christ's faithful in his diocese 'as a Christian community and *family*.'[848] There were, however, no attempts to use the African concept of family to elaborate further on these points; and we are not aware of any Ghanaian theological work on church as *family of God* which pre-dated the first African Synod.

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[839] However, the degree of reception by the Catholic Church in Ghana was quite similar to what pertained in many other African countries.

[840] We are yet to come across a statement or pastoral letter issued by an individual Ghanaian bishop on the topic of church as *family of God* in the said period.

[841] See, for instance, 'Joint Pastoral Letter of the Catholic Hierarchy of Ghana in the Year of Grace (1980), the Centenary Year of the Catholic Church in Ghana, "Keep Your Light Shining"' in *Ghana Bishops Speak: A Collection of Communiques, Memoranda and Pastoral Letters of the Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference*, vol. 1 (Accra: National Catholic Secretariat, 1999), p. 49.

[842] See, for instance, 'Joint Pastoral Letter (1985)' in *Ghana Bishops Speak*, vol. 1, p. 98.

[843] See, for instance, 'Communique (1987)' in *Ghana Bishops Speak*, vol. 1, p. 121.

[844] *cf*. 'Pastoral Letter (1974)' in *Ghana Bishops Speak*, vol. 1, p. 11.

[845] The first synod of the Kumasi Diocese took place a whole decade before the first African Synod. This diocese was elevated to the status of an Archdiocese in 2002.

[846] *Acts and Declarations of the First Synod of the Catholic Diocese of Kumasi, December 1984* (Kumasi: Diocese of Kumasi, 1985), p. 9.

[847] *Acts and Declarations of the First Synod of the Catholic Diocese of Kumasi,* p. 2.

[848] *Acts and Declarations of the First Synod of the Catholic Diocese of Kumasi*, p. 1.

Secondly, though the Catholic Church in Ghana was a signatory to the communique and resolutions of the Seventh General Assembly of SECAM (1984)[849] which recommended the establishment of SCCs to all national episcopal conferences,[850] the pastoral practice of SCCs was not a national Catholic policy,[851] though Wa Diocese had it as a diocesan policy,[852] while Kumasi Diocese had apparently opted for it at its 1984 Synod,[853] and a few parishes scattered across the country practised it. This state of affairs is attested to by the *Instrumentum Laboris* of the first National Pastoral Congress (1997), *Ecclesia in Ghana*:

> The question seems …to be whether people and even the local churches [dioceses] really believe in [Small] Christian Communities. Do pastors themselves, that is, bishops and priests believe that [Small] Christian Community building is a credible pastoral alternative to the traditional forms of pastoral ministry that pastors are used to? … These questions seem relevant against the background of the fact that despite the lot of discussions on the desirability, and even the urgency, to build [Small] Christian Communities, these have hardly taken off in most local churches [dioceses], particularly here in Ghana.[854]

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[849] The Seventh General Assembly of SECAM preceded the first African Synod by a decade.

[850] 'Final Communique, Resolution and Recommendation', *Acts of the Seventh Plenary Assembly of the Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar, Kinshasa, 15-22 July 1984*, pp. 226, 228.

[851] Contrast the situation in Ghana with the situation of a national policy in Burkina Faso (*cf*. Wuestenberg, 'A Comparison between the SCCs of Burkina Faso with those of South Africa', p. 181).

[852] In his autobiography, which was launched in 2013, Archbishop (Emeritus) Kpiebaya, who was once the bishop of Wa Diocese, states that the formation of SCCs became a pastoral priority in Wa Diocese in 1975, shortly after his episcopal ordination. He speaks of the situation in the diocese which the pastoral tool of SCCs was to aid in addressing: 'the communal living of the faith has not been sufficiently stressed in our work of evangelization. Instead we have presented to our Christians an *individualistic* way of living the gospel…. Their preoccupation was that each one should try and die in the state of grace in order to enjoy the beatific vision. But the truth is that God's plan is not just to save us as individuals but as a people.' He then goes on to mention that this manner of evangelization has contributed to the passivity among the lay faithful. His keen interest in SCCs was, however, generated earlier on by two events: (a) the 1971 International Catechetical Congress (Rome), which stressed that the SCCs are 'particularly suitable environment for passing on the faith'; Archbishop Kpiebaya was then (as a priest) the diocesan director of the Catechists Training Centre (Kaleo); and (b) the 1974 Synod of Bishops (Rome) which recommended the formation of SCCs as a pastoral tool for the communal living of the faith [Kpiebaya, *Not by Power, But by My Spirit* (Takoradi: St. Francis, no date), pp. 145-50; *cf. Ecclesia in Ghana* no. 81; *cf*. J.T. Naab, *The Basic Christian Community in Biblical Perspective* (Port Harcourt: CIWA, 1987), p. 26].

[853] There is no explicit mention of *Basic* or *Small* Christian Communities (SCCs) in the *Acts and Declarations of the First Synod of the Catholic Diocese of Kumasi* (1984). What is mentioned in the document is *local* Christian communities (p. 9). This is an apparent reference to SCCs, since the third diocesan synod states 'that as far back as 1984, the Small Christian Community concept was one of the issues that was given attention at the synod' [*Acts and Declarations of the Third Synod of the Catholic Archdiocese of Kumasi: Church-as-Family of God, 3-12 December 2004* (Kumasi: Kumasi Archdiocese, 2005), no. 76].

[854] *Ecclesia in Ghana,* nos 79-80. Subsequently references to this document will be abbreviated as 'EIG'.

This is not to say that some essential elements of church as family (the sense of we-feeling, solidarity, sharing and care for the needy) were entirely absent in the Catholic Church in Ghana. The sense of being family was experienced to some extent especially by members of the same church associations or groups, as well as in some smaller parishes and outstation communities, particularly, in the rural areas. Generally, however, it could be said that the sense of belonging among church members was low as attested to by our earlier citation from Archbishop Kpiebaya (*cf*. section 6:1).

6.3.2 Reception of 'Family of God' Model since the First African Synod

(a) Ghana Bishops Speak

From the available material we have consulted, it appears that none of the interventions made by the bishops of Ghana at the first African Synod addressed the topic of the church as *family of God*. Happily, however, the very first communique (issued two months after the African Synod) by the Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference would employ this model. In the communique, the bishops stated that 'the Synod emphasized the need for Christians to live as one family, taking the ideals of the African family as its model.'[855] In the *family of God*, according to the bishops, we have God as our Father,[856] and we are all brothers and sisters through our Lord Jesus Christ, 'the universal saviour of mankind, the only mediator between human beings' and God.[857]

Furthermore, according to the bishops, this common fraternity as brothers and sisters of one family is not restricted to only Christians but it exists among all humans, since all have been created by the one Creator-God. In this light, they said, 'the Synod stressed the

[855] *Ghana Bishops Speak*, vol. 1, p. 247.
[856] *Ghana Bishops Speak*, vol. 1, p. 242.
[857] *Ghana Bishops Speak*, vol. 1, p. 240.

need for Africans to live in unity as one family.'[858] This unity is sustained by obedience to the greatest commandment of love of God and neighbour, created in the image and likeness of God.[859]

Subsequently, the bishops' advent pastoral letter of the same year (1994), entitled 'And God Made Us a Gift to One Another', which was written to address, among other things, the need to sustain peace and unity in Ghana, had 'family of God' as its underlying theme. The letter began with the words: 'Dear brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus, we are the people of God, we are the very "family of God".' Then, the bishops explicitly referred to the church as *family of God*: 'It is in this [God's] name that we, your pastors, greet you at the beginning of this season of Advent, when the whole *family of God*, the church of Jesus Christ, listens …to the prophets'.[860]

Further on they stated that 'it was at the Synod that the concept "church as the family of God" emerged, and it is gradually taking possession of our hearts and minds, and giving a new sense of belonging to all the children of God, thanks to the good news preached by Jesus Christ the saviour of mankind.'[861] While it is true to say that the Synod became a catalyst for the use of the model church-*family of God*, it may not be exactly right to say that the model originated from the Synod, for as we noted above, in Burkina Faso it pre-dated the Synod.

Once again, the bishops employed the *family of God* model to urge all Ghanaians to live in fraternal unity as one family at a time when there were conflicts in certain parts of

[858] *Ghana Bishops Speak*, vol. 1, p. 241.
[859] *Ghana Bishops Speak*, vol. 1, p. 242.
[860] *Ghana Bishops Speak*, vol. 1, p. 248.
[861] *Ghana Bishops Speak*, vol. 1, p. 249.

the country.[862] They buttressed this point with the example of the oneness existing among members of the church despite their different tribal origins:

> In our church, 'the family of God', we are happy to note that this brotherhood of all in Christ is evident not only through the church's presence among all tribes and peoples, but also through the inter-tribal expressions in our worship, our songs and dances, and most especially through the several inter-tribal marriages and relationships. We encourage these modes of expressing our oneness, our common filiation in God, the Father and Creator of all, in Jesus Christ our one Lord and saviour, and in the Holy Spirit, the Giver of life to us all.[863]

However in the years that followed (including the year of the first National Pastoral Congress), the model church-*family of God* did not seem to explicitly appear in the statements and letters of the bishops of Ghana with the exception of their 1999 Communique.[864]

(b) First National Pastoral Congress

In presenting the fruits of the first African Synod to the Catholic Church on the continent, John Paul II wrote: 'For all the peoples of Africa the best preparation for the new millennium must consist in a firm commitment to implement with great fidelity the decisions and orientations which' are presented in the apostolic exhortation, *Ecclesia in Africa*.[865] A year earlier (1994), at the synod itself, the intervention of the then president of the Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference, Francis A. K. Lodonu, would suggest some concrete ways for facilitating the synodal implementation: 'In the end, the success of this Synod depends largely on how well its deliberations will be implemented. We, consequently, recommend mandatory National and Diocesan Synods within four years of

[862] *Ghana Bishops Speak*, vol. 1, p. 251.
[863] *Ghana Bishops Speak*, vol. 1, pp. 251-2.
[864] *Ghana Bishops Speak*, vol. 2, pp. 61-3. The last document in this second volume is the '2005 Communique'.
[865] EIA 141.

the final celebration of this Synod.'[866] It was in line with the above that the Catholic Church in Ghana held its first National Pastoral Congress in Cape Coast from 7 to 14 April 1997.

Inspired by African Synod's clarion call to African Christians to become more truly a *family of God*,[867] and following the lead of the bishops of Ghana, the *Instrumentum Laboris* (of the congress), *Ecclesia in Ghana* and the *Pastoral Guidelines* (the recommendations of the congress) elaborated on the church as *family of God* and proposed SCCs as a pastoral tool for promoting and fostering a concrete experience of family-hood among Catholics in the parishes and dioceses in Ghana. The point of departure for understanding the church as *family of God*, as the National Pastoral Congress saw it, is the natural family itself: 'if Christianity is to succeed in Ghana, it should take root in the family.'[868] In this respect, the congress highlighted some values of the Ghanaian family (*cf.* subsections 5.6.2-5.6.5). They include the love for life and children, a broad concept of kinship, solidarity and collective consciousness, mutual support, collective ownership and division of labour, and communal worship. The sense of solidarity and community life can also be established with non-biological relations. Furthermore, within the family there is an amicable system of resolving conflicts, and there are checks and balances on leadership roles.[869]

On the other hand, the Ghanaian family has certain counter-values or disvalues (*cf.* subsection 5.6.6). These include exaggerated love for life and children, exclusiveness, excessive prestige, false solidarity, the craze for money and possession, injustice and

[866] F.A.K. Lodonu, 'Intervention', http://www.afrikaworld.net/synod/sessions.htm (accessed on 12 July, 2013).
[867] EIA 63; EIG 81.
[868] Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference, *Pastoral Guidelines for the National Pastoral Congress, Cape Coast, 7-14 April, 1997* (GCBC, no date and no place of publication), p. 16; *cf.* EIG 244. The family is used in the *extended* sense (EIG 231) as explained in section 5.5.
[869] EIG 233.

violence, as well as discrimination against women. The Ghanaian concept of family, therefore, needs to be purified and transformed in the light of the gospel of Christ in order that it may become a good basis for contextualizing the conciliar ecclesiology of communion.[870]

Furthermore, taking cognizance of the largeness of the population of many parishes in Ghana, the congress recommended (in line with EIA 89) the establishment of vibrant SCCs as a concrete way of promoting and fostering the sense of being family among parishioners:

> The large crowds of the regular parish situation do not really induce fellowship and fellow-feeling among believers in Christ. There is too much anonymity in these crowds. Smaller numbers stand a better chance of reaching Christians in their own homes, villages, localities, neighbourhoods and institutions. The [Small] Christian Community concept thus aims at helping all baptized people to form living Christian Communities which make it possible for Christians to experience real fellowship as a consequence of the awareness of the one faith, one Lord and one Spirit that bind them together. The ministries embodied and operative in the Christian Community set-up offer every Christian the opportunity to extend a helping hand to answer the needs of those with whom one shares the same community.[871]

(c) Diocesan Synods and Pastoral Congresses

The deliberations and recommendations of the first African Synod and the first National Pastoral Congress were expected to be further deliberated upon and implemented in the archdioceses/dioceses of Ghana. Our research reveals a varying degree of follow-ups by the various archdioceses/dioceses. There are currently nineteen archdioceses/dioceses and one apostolic vicariate in Ghana. These twenty ecclesial circumscriptions in Ghana have been grouped into the four provinces of Accra, Cape Coast, Kumasi and Tamale. To have a survey of the reception of the ecclesiology of Vatican II which could be quite reflective of the situation in the Catholic Church in Ghana, we chose nine out of the twenty

[870] EIG 233-8.
[871] EIG 82; *Pastoral Guidelines*, p. 5.

ecclesial circumscriptions. Besides Accra Archdiocese (to which the researcher belongs), we chose a relatively urban and a relatively rural diocese from each of the four provinces. They are: Koforidua Diocese and Keta-Akatsi Diocese (from Accra Province), Cape Coast Archdiocese and Wiawso Diocese (from Cape Coast Province), Kumasi Archdiocese and Goaso Diocese (from Kumasi Province), and Tamale Archdiocese and Wa Diocese (from Tamale Province).

A statutory provision by which the diocesan bishop together with a good representation of the priests, religious and laity of the diocese assemble to deliberate on matters 'for the good of the whole of the diocesan community' is the holding of a diocesan synod (can. 460). 'Only the diocesan bishop can convene a diocesan synod' (can. 462§1), 'after consulting the council of priests' (can. 461§1). One would have expected that in the bid to deliberate further on the issues of the first African Synod and first National Pastoral Congress, most of the archdioceses/dioceses in Ghana would have held their synods.[872] However, of the nine archdioceses/dioceses we surveyed only six have had their synods: Kumasi (1984, 1994, 2004), Accra (1996/7, 2009), Wa (1998), Koforidua (2003/4), Cape Coast (2005) and Wiawso (2011).

Various reasons have been given to explain why the remaining three archdiocese/dioceses have not yet held their synods, but have rather chosen to hold pastoral congresses:[873] Keta-Akatsi (1997, 2005), Tamale (2001), and Goaso (2010). Authorities in these dioceses gave financial constraints and/or the fact that their dioceses are young as the

[872] There were ten (10) archdioceses/dioceses in Ghana as at the time of the first African Synod (1994); and out of these, only Kumasi Diocese (1994) and Accra Archdiocese (1996/97) held their synods before the first National Pastoral Congress (1997). Furthermore, of the fifteen (15) archdioceses/dioceses in Ghana at the time of the first National Pastoral Congress, only four (4) of them were able to hold their synods within five years after the first African Synod: Wa Diocese (1998) and Navrongo-Bolgatanga Diocese (1999/2000), besides the two dioceses mentioned above. This was the situation despite the *four-year time frame* which the then president of the Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference, Bishop Lodonu, had recommended at the African Synod (*cf*. subsection 6.3.2b).

[873] Diocesan pastoral congresses have no statutory provisions in the *Code of Canon Law* (1983).

main reasons for not being able to hold their synods.[874] The diocesan synods being considered had very broad consultations among the clergy, religious and laity of the various dioceses over a period of two to three years before their plenary assemblies were held. On the other hand, the diocesan pastoral congresses had less extensive consultations. We shall present in what follows the reception of the contextualized ecclesiological model church-*family of God* in the synods and pastoral congresses of the nine archdioceses/dioceses indicated above. We wish to begin with Kumasi Archdiocese, the first to hold a synod in the Catholic Church in Ghana.[875]

Synods of Kumasi Archdiocese

With the glimpses on the church perceived as family in the first Kumasi diocesan synod (1984), and its second synod (1994) coming on the heels of the first African Synod which promoted the family-model of the church, one would have expected that the second synod of Kumasi would have emphasized this new model of the church. Strangely, however, though the diocesan synod adopted the theme of the first African Synod as 'The Evangelizing Mission of the Church in Kumasi Diocese', the topic of 'church as family of God' was not a major concern; and promoting it through SCCs was not captured in the *Acts and Declarations* of the synod. The model church-*family of God* was only hinted at a couple of places. It was mentioned under the topic of ecumenism: 'The church-family has its origin in the Blessed Trinity at the depths of whom the Holy Spirit is the bond of communion.'[876] Another place where the model was mentioned was in the synodal closing

[874] Apart from Tamale Archdiocese, the other two dioceses were established after the first African Synod: Keta-Akatsi (1994) and Goaso (1997).
[875] Awinongya has briefly reviewed the variety of expressions ('local family church', 'family-church', church-family', 'church as family of God', 'church-family of God', etc.) and their appropriateness or otherwise in the documents of the synods of Accra, Wa, Navrongo-Bolgatanga and Koforidua (Awinongya, *The Understanding of Family in Ghana* pp. 7-10).
[876] *Acts and Declarations of the 2nd Kumasi Diocesan Synod, 4-14 December 1994* (Kumasi: Kumasi Diocese, 1995), p. 21.

remarks by the then Bishop Sarpong when he referred to the experience of the synodal assembly: 'Indeed we have lived up to the expectations of the African Synod which has come up with another ecclesiological concept for Africa, namely, "church as family of God."'[877]

Happily, however, the little attention given to the model church-*family of God* in the second synod of Kumasi Diocese would be more than compensated for in its third synod held in 2004. This third synod had 'The Church as Family of God' as its main theme. Moreover, all the ten topics treated were related to this main theme. In addition, the entire first part of the three-part *Acts and Declarations of the Third Synod of the Catholic Archdiocese of Kumasi* has been dedicated to the 'Doctrinal and Anthropological Reflections on the Model of Church-as-Family of God'.[878] Furthermore, in the second part of the document where the pastoral vision and orientation for church as *family of God* is elaborated on, there is a stress on the establishment of SCCs.[879] Then in the third part dedicated to the 'Acts and Declarations', an entire section of chapter four focuses on 'Pastoral Response to Urbanization: Small Christian Community Concept'.[880] Here, it may be worthwhile to cite from the document:

> In view of the … fact that interaction among parishioners continues to be negligible, due to the large size of parishes, the synod urges: The Catechetical Office shall, within one year of the promulgation of these Acts, come out with a clear document and guidelines about the concept of SCC and what role the SCC is expected to fulfil in the concrete pastoral situation of the Archdiocese;
>
> That on the basis of the approved document, the pastors shall be given one year to organize intensive formation on all the aspects of SCC (pastoral, theological, structural, inter-relational, etc.) to different levels in parish communities and in the end to potential SCC groupings themselves …. That pastors shall ensure that they educate and create awareness of SCC in their parishes through: homilies … [and] the pastoral plan of the parish ….[881]

[877] Sarpong, 'Closing Remarks' in *Acts and Declarations of the 2nd Kumasi Diocesan Synod*, p. 41.
[878] *Acts and Declarations of the Third Synod of the Catholic Archdiocese of Kumasi*, nos 1-42.
[879] *Acts and Declarations of the Third Synod of the Catholic Archdiocese of Kumasi*, nos 50-1.
[880] *Acts and Declarations of the Third Synod of the Catholic Archdiocese of Kumasi*, nos 75-9.
[881] *Acts and Declarations of the Third Synod of the Catholic Archdiocese of Kumasi*, no. 78.

We shall consider the extent of the practical promotion of SCCs in parishes later on in this chapter.

Synods of Accra Archdiocese

The first synod of the Archdiocese of Accra (December 1996 – January 1997), which was inspired by the first African Synod, was an opportunity to evaluate its centenary[882] of evangelization and to plan for new ways of realizing the mission of the church in the new millennium. Hence, its main theme was: 'Renewal of Evangelization in the Archdiocese of Accra'.[883] More than the 1994 Kumasi Synod, but less than the 2004 Kumasi Synod, the first Synod of Accra considered the issue of the church as *family of God*. Firstly, there were deliberations on how to build the church in the Archdiocese as a *family of God*. In this regard, there was a call for more rural-urban cooperation among the parishes.[884]

Secondly with regard to life in the individual parishes, it was recommended that priests and lay people collaborate to ensure that 'parish life is harmonious, expressing the church as family, where all devote "themselves to the Apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of the bread and the prayers" (Acts 2:42) (EIA 100).'[885] Thirdly, to foster the church as *family of God* in the Archdiocese as a whole and in the individual parishes in a situation where the residences of many Catholics are situated within the territories of parishes they do not belong to, it was recommended that: 'serious and concerted efforts should be made to bring together all Catholics living in the same community, irrespective of

[882] The centenary was marked in 1993; and the synod was convoked by the then Archbishop of Accra, Dominic K. Andoh.
[883] *Challenges and Hopes for a New Millennium: Outcome of the First Synod, December 1996-January 1997* (Accra: Archdiocese of Accra, no date), p. 4.
[884] *Challenges and Hopes*, p. 21
[885] *Challenges and Hopes*, p. 21

their parish affiliations, to form Small Christian Communities under the pastoral care of that parish.'[886] Fourthly, once again the formation of SCCs was seen as a way of fostering familial 'unity in diversity' among the various ethnic groupings and nationalities in the most cosmopolitan of the dioceses in Ghana.[887]

The second Synod (2009) of Accra, which was held to develop a ten-year strategic plan in preparation for the celebration of its 125th anniversary,[888] reiterated the importance of building the church as *family of God* in the Archdiocese:

> A decade after the first Synod of Accra, and looking at the challenges of pastoral care in the metropolises of Accra and Tema and their environs, it has become imperative to accept and implement the model *church-family of God* as "the guiding idea for the evangelization of" [EIA 63] the Archdiocese of Accra. It will be simply ideal if we could indeed build the church in the Archdiocese as *church-family of God*.[889]

In view of this, there is a call for better concerted efforts for the formation of SCCs.[890]

Synod of Wa Diocese

Like some of the synods mentioned above, the first diocesan synod of Wa (1998) was inspired by the first African Synod and its 'Decrees and Recommendations' were influenced by *Ecclesia in Africa*.[891] Therefore, its theme was: 'Let Evangelization Shine Forth in a Renewed Life of Faith.'[892] Moreover, more explicitly than the diocesan synods mentioned above, the document of Wa Synod states that its 'Decrees and

[886] *Challenges and Hopes*, p. 21
[887] *Challenges and Hopes*, p. 8.
[888] Its theme was: '"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations baptizing them… teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you" (Matt. 28:19-20): Renewing the Church and Fulfilling our Vocation and Mission in the Catholic Archdiocese in Preparation for its 125th Anniversary.' This synod preceded the second African Synod by only eight months. The issues of justice, peace and reconciliation of the second African Synod were also discussed at the Accra Synod, which was convoked by Archbishop Charles G. Palmer-Buckle.
[889] *Acts of the Second Synod of the Catholic Archdiocese of Accra, 2009* (Accra: Archdiocese of Accra, 2009), p. 31.
[890] *Acts of the Second Synod of the Catholic Archdiocese of Accra*, pp. 32-3.
[891] *Acts of the First Wa Diocesan Synod, 1995-1998: Document of the Decrees and Recommendations* (Wa: Diocese of Wa, 1999), no. 11.
[892] *Acts of the First Wa Diocesan Synod,* no. 6.

Recommendations' took into consideration the recommendations of the first National Pastoral Congress.[893]

The attention given to the model church-*family of God* in the synodal document of Wa Diocese is quite like that of the first synod of Accra Archdiocese; however, its elaboration is not as detailed as found in the 'Acts' of the 2004 Kumasi Synod. In the Wa document, the diocese is presented as a *family of God* with the phrases: 'diocesan family'[894] and 'Wa Diocesan family of God'.[895] And similar to the first Accra Synod there is a consideration of church as *family of God* under the topic of 'The Local Church: Unity in Diversity'. Here, the importance of the elements of complementarity and dialogue are highlighted: 'Genuine diversity does not, therefore, threaten the unity in the family, but rather enhances this unity with the complementarity of the gifts which individual members of the family bring along to enrich it. The various forms of the division can be healed through honest dialogue.'[896]

We find it quite curious the fact that SCCs are not mentioned in the post-synodal document of Wa Diocese – the first diocese in Ghana to consider SCCs as a priority (*cf.* subsection 6.3.1).[897] Are they so well established that they that are no longer a priority? Our field research proved otherwise, for only a minority of parishes in the diocese still have SCCs that are functioning well.[898] And when we enquired from Bishop Paul Bemile, the

[893] *Acts of the First Wa Diocesan Synod,* no. 11.
[894] *Acts of the First Wa Diocesan Synod,* nos 18, 21, 22, 90.
[895] *Acts of the First Wa Diocesan Synod,* no. 92.
[896] *Acts of the First Wa Diocesan Synod,* no. 14.
[897] In 1975, a Missionary of Africa priest, Bernard Joinet of the Pastoral Research Institute of Mwanza (Tanzania), was invited by Archbishop Kpiebaya to conduct seminars on SCCs for the priests, religious and some lay faithful of Wa Diocese. The talks of the seminars have been published in *The Wa Review*, 1 (1975) [the pages of this June 1975 issue have no numbers. This June issue is no. 3]. Furthermore, a booklet by Paul Bekye gives a brief history of the beginnings of the SCCs in Wa Diocese up till the early 1980s [Bekye, *Dagaaba Christian Communities: A Step towards Church Renewal* (Wa: Catholic Press, 1983].
[898] Reflecting almost four decades after he had initiated SCCs as a pastoral priority in Wa Diocese, Archbishop Kpiebaya indicates why their formation has not gained much success: 'The SCC concept as a pastoral strategy was tried in almost all the existing parishes at the time with varying degrees of enthusiasm and success. In

present local ordinary, he informed us that the promotion of SCCs is no longer a diocesan policy.[899]

Synod of Koforidua Diocese

Similar to some of the diocesan synods mentioned already, the Koforidua Diocesan Synod (2003/2004) was inspired and influenced by the first African Synod.[900] It is explicitly stated in its post-synodal document that *Ecclesia in Africa* was its 'key text book'.[901] Besides, its theme was adapted from EIA 63: 'The Church as Family of God and its Evangelizing Mission in the Catholic Diocese of Koforidua: "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household" (Acts 16:31)'.[902] Furthermore, quite like the Wa Synod, reference is also made to the outcome of the first National Pastoral Congress.

With regard to the Koforidua Synod's consideration of the model church-*family of God*, one could say that quite similar to the 2004 Kumasi Synod (held in the same year), this ecclesiology guided its deliberations on almost all the twelve specific topics that were treated.[903] However, unlike the Kumasi Synod, the Koforidua Synod did not present in-depth theological and anthropological reflections on the church as *family of God*.

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many places, after several abortive attempts, they were abandoned, either because they were found too engaging or the priest who had made the attempt was transferred.' He explains further: 'the minimum success of this new pastoral approach in the Wa Diocese [is] due mainly to the unwillingly of the pastors to venture into new grounds.' Despite this, we share in his conviction that 'the usefulness of the SCC as a means of building the church-*family* cannot be overemphasized.' In other words, we are 'convinced that the SCCs approach is a sound pastoral strategy for the church in Africa' (Kpiebaya, *Not by Power, But by My Spirit*, pp. 149-50).

[899] Bishop Paul Bemile, Interview, 28 July 2013, Wa.

[900] *Acts of the First Synod of the Catholic Diocese of Koforidua* (Koforidua: Diocese of Koforidua, 2004), p. 2. This synod was convoked by the then bishop of Koforidua, Charles G. Palmer-Buckle.

[901] *Acts of the First Synod of the Catholic Diocese of Koforidua*, p. ii.

[902] *Acts of the First Synod of the Catholic Diocese of Koforidua*, p. 3.

[903] *Acts of the First Synod of the Catholic Diocese of Koforidua*, pp. 12, 16, 22, 28, 31, 39-40.

Concerning the promotion and fostering of SCCs, the attention given by the Koforidua Synod is more like that of the synods of Accra and less like the details given by the 2004 Kumasi Synod.[904] What might be quite unique about the Koforidua Synod is the recommendation of the promotion of SCCs as a way of fostering *laity formation*.[905]

Synod of Cape Coast Archdiocese

It took more than a decade after the first African synod for Cape Coast Archdiocese to celebrate its synod (2005).[906] However, despite the distance in time between the two synods, the Cape Coast Synod was influenced by the continental one. This is clearly expressed in its 'major objective': 'to fashion out a new vision for the evangelizing mission of the Archdiocese of Cape Coast.'[907] Hence, its theme was: '"Lord, That I May See" (Luke 18:41): Towards a New Vision of the Evangelizing Mission of the Church in the Archdiocese of Cape Coast'.[908]

Like some of the diocesan synods mentioned above, the Cape Coast Synod considered the model church-*family of God*.[909] More specifically than the Accra, Koforidua and Wa synods, the Cape Coast Synod recommended the study of 'how the Ghanaian concept of family, which fosters [unity and] interdependence, can bring about social and spiritual cohesion among the family members in the Archdiocese of Cape Coast.'[910] Furthermore, seeing the Ghanaian family as a model for the church of the Archdiocese, it was recommended that 'pastoral care for the sick could draw lessons from the African communal spirit and support given to the sick. This approach to the pastoral care of the sick

[904] *Acts of the First Synod of the Catholic Diocese of Koforidua*, pp. 32-3.
[905] *Acts of the First Synod of the Catholic Diocese of Koforidua*, p. 37.
[906] The Cape Coast Synod was convoked by Cardinal Peter Appiah Turkson, the then archbishop of Cape Coast.
[907] *First Synod*, *Archdiocese of Cape Coast: Synodal Acts* (Cape Coast: Archdiocese of Cape Coast, 2006), p. 3.
[908] *Archdiocese of Cape Coast: Synodal Acts*, p. 1.
[909] *Archdiocese of Cape Coast: Synodal Acts*, p. 42.
[910] *Archdiocese of Cape Coast: Synodal Acts*, p. 38.

should involve the whole community; all members of the church should feel obliged to notify the priest or the catechist of a sick member, and mobilize resources necessary to assist the sick person.'[911] This notwithstanding, the theological and anthropological reflections are not as detailed as found in the 2004 Kumasi Synod document.

A final point concerns the Cape Coast Synod's consideration of SCCs. Like that of Koforidua, besides mentioning the need to establish SCCs in the parishes, the Cape Coast Synod recommended that they be used to foster lay formation.[912]

Synod of Wiawso Diocese

Of the three dioceses (under consideration) which were created after the first African Synod, only Wiawso Diocese has had its synod.[913] The 'Evaluation of the Diocese' questionnaire, which seemed to have served as a *Lineamenta*, had the theme: 'Walking Together for Ten Years as a Family of God.' In its preamble, the bishop of the diocese, Joseph F. K. Essien, mentioned the need to examine the challenges facing the diocese as *family of God*. It has been divided into four main sections, dealing with pastoral, human relations, socio-economic development and welfare issues.[914] The synod itself took up the above theme adding a future dimension to it: 'Walking Together for Ten Years as a Family of God: The Way Forward.'[915] However, with the exception of the keynote address, delivered by the then bishop of Obuasi Diocese, Gabriel J. Anokye, none of the other talks seems to have touched on the topic of 'family of God'. The topic of his address was: 'The Church as Family of God and its Evangelization Mission vis-à-vis the Proliferation of

[911] *Archdiocese of Cape Coast: Synodal Acts*, p. 39.
[912] *Archdiocese of Cape Coast: Synodal Acts*, p. 10.
[913] The Wiawso Synod was held in August 2011, but its 'Acts' were yet to be published as at 31 May 2014. The documents made available to us were: the 'Evaluation of the Diocese' questionnaire, the programme of, keynote address and other talks delivered at the synod. We could not lay hand on any *Instrumentum Laboris*.
[914] 'Evaluation of the Diocese: Walking Together for 10 Years as a Family of God' (no date), pp. 1-2.
[915] 'First Diocesan Synod of Wiawso: Programme, 1-4 August 2011', p. 1.

Churches in the Diocese'.[916] Nonetheless, apart from the mention of the topic in the preamble, and its reiteration a few times in the body and conclusion of the address, Bishop Anokye did not elaborate on the church as *family of God*. He focused mainly on the issues of the 'proliferation of churches'[917] and 'evangelization'.[918] Furthermore, none of the documents examined dealt with the formation or promotion of SCCs. Therefore, despite its explicit theme on the 'family of God', one may conclude on the face of the documents made available to us that the Synod of Wiawso Diocese seems to be the least explicit on building the church as *family of God*.

Keta-Akatsi Diocesan Pastoral Congresses

Created in December, 1994 (a few months after the first African Synod), it is interesting to note that the then new Diocese of Keta-Akatsi held its first pastoral congress about three years after the continental synod and only six months after the first National Pastoral Congress. The bishop of the diocese, Anthony K. Adanuty, indicated in his welcome address that the diocesan congress was a follow up to the African Synod and the national congress. Under the theme, 'The Church in Keta-Akatsi Diocese and its Evangelizing Mission', the congress discussed among other issues, the building up of the church as *family of God* in the diocese.[919] In the communique issued at the end of the congress, the establishment of SCCs in parishes was recommended to foster unity among Catholics and to minimize defections to the new religious movements.[920]

[916] G.J. Anokye, 'The Church as Family of God and its Evangelization Mission vis-à-vis the Proliferation of Churches in the Diocese', August 2011, p. 1.
[917] Anokye, 'The Church as Family of God and its Evangelization Mission', pp. 3-7.
[918] Anokye, 'The Church as Family of God and its Evangelization Mission', pp. 7-23.
[919] 'Reports from Keta-Akatsi Diocesan Pastoral Congress, 6-12 October 1997, at Abor', pp. 1-2.
[920] 'Communique from the First Diocesan Pastoral Congress of the Keta-Akatsi Diocese', 12 October 1997, Akatsi, no. 23; the communique was originally written in Ewe (local language); we made use of a translation by Beatrice Agbeko of Holy Spirit Cathedral Parish, Accra.

A second pastoral congress took place in 2005 to mark the tenth anniversary of the diocese. Its theme was quite similar to that of the Wiawso Synod: 'Ten Years of the Church as a Family in the Keta-Akasti Diocese: Challenges and the Way Forward.' However, unlike the Wiawso Synod – but rather like the synods of Kumasi (2004), Accra, Wa, Koforidua and Cape Coast – this second pastoral congress of Keta-Akatsi Diocese explicitly considered the building up of the diocese as *family of God*. The keynote address, delivered by Bishop Paul Bemile of Wa Diocese, is a lengthy presentation on the congress theme. He elaborated on: the church as family – new model of being church; pre-Vatican II and Vatican II models of church; *family of God* as a distinctive African understanding of the church; the African family with particular reference to the people of Keta-Akatsi Diocese; the 'bloodless' family as the gospel ideal of family; how the family in the Keta-Akatsi Diocese has lived the ideal family in the past ten years; and he concluded suggesting some indicators for the 'way forward'.[921]

The congress fathers and mothers embraced several of the suggestions of Bishop Bemile as is evident in the communique issued at the end of the congress. There is a call for all the faithful in the diocese to be more committed to the gospel ideal of being *family of God*; for an atmosphere of true Christian love, forgiveness and reconciliation, justice and peace; for more participation of the laity in the life and mission of the church, for which reason there is the need for better formation of laity; for greater attention on fostering the families (especially those of young couples) as 'domestic church' – for the state of these 'cells' of the church and society impact on the latter entities; and the fostering of SCCs in the parishes is re-emphasized.[922]

[921] P. Bemile, 'Ten Years of the Church as Family in the Diocese of Keta-Akatsi: Challenges and the Way Forward – A View from an Outsider', October 2005, pp. 1-24.
[922] 'Communique from the Second Diocesan Pastoral Congress of the Keta-Akatsi Diocese to the Catholic Faithful and to all People of Goodwill', 29 October 2005, Torve, pp. 2-4.

Tamale Archdiocesan Pastoral Congress

The theme of the Tamale Archdiocesan Pastoral Congress (2001) was: 'Building the Diocese as God's Family for Effective Evangelization and Self-Reliance'. As in some of the diocesan synods mentioned already, the influence of the first African Synod is obvious in this theme. The keynote address on the theme of the congress was given by Fr. Camillo Bonsuuri. He dwelt on 'Building the Church as Family of God' (part 1), 'The Church-Family Image as an Effective Means of Evangelization' (part 2), and 'Self-Reliance' (part 3).[923] The address was quite in-depth as that of Bishop Bemile and the theological and anthropological reflections of the 2004 Kumasi Synod.

Consequently, taking into consideration the cosmopolitan nature of some of the parishes in the city of Tamale, the following vision was fashioned out at the end of the congress: 'To build our local church *family of God* in which cultural, ethnic and linguistic differences will be an enrichment and invitation to openness rather than a barrier and source of conflict.'[924] This statement, like the first synod of Accra and the synod of Wa, stressed the importance of the element of complementarity in diversity.

Earlier on in his opening address to the congress, Archbishop Kpiebaya (the chief promoter of SCCs in his former diocese of Wa) had stressed the indispensability of SCCs in promoting and fostering the greater participation of the lay faithful in the church as *family of God*.[925] However, the talk scheduled to animate discussions on SCCs at the congress could not be delivered as the speaker was bereaved.[926]

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[923] *Church as Family of God: Tamale Archdiocesan Pastoral Congress*, pp. 10-4.
[924] *Church as Family of God: Tamale Archdiocesan Pastoral Congress*, p. 8.
[925] See p. 9 of the printed programme for the celebrations, entitled: 'Celebrations of Golden Jubilee – Diocese of Tamale, 1-7 January 2001: Building the Diocese as God's Family'.
[926] *Church as Family of God: Tamale Archdiocesan Pastoral Congress*, p. 7.

Goaso Diocesan Pastoral Congress

To evaluate the first twelve years of evangelization since the creation of the Diocese of Goaso and to propose strategies for more effective ways of realizing its mission, the diocesan bishop, Peter K. Atuahene, convoked a gathering of a cross-section of the clergy, religious and the laity, in October 2010. Unlike the preceding synods and congresses, there was no stated general theme; the main concern was the evaluation of and proposals for the following specific areas of the life and mission of the church in the diocese: laity formation, youth formation, liturgy, education, health care, human relations, and finance and self-reliance.[927]

Some ecclesiological expressions of Vatican II (e.g. 'people of God' and 'body of Christ') could be found in the post-congress document.[928] However, unlike the above synods and congresses, there was no explicit mention of the model church-*family of God*, nor was there any recommendation on the promotion of SCCs in the parishes. This notwithstanding issues bordering on fostering good human relations and ecclesial communal life (especially care for the sick and aged) were discussed.[929]

6.3.3 Reception in Theory by the Clergy and Religious in Ghana

Having considered the reception of the contextualized model church-*family of God* mainly in some documents of the local church, we wish to now turn our attention to the findings of our field research.[930] In this regard, we begin with a consideration of the

[927] 'Evaluating the Catholic Diocese of Goaso: 12 Years of Evangelization, Challenges, Responses and Prospects', 17-22 October 2010, Goaso, pp. 1-4.
[928] 'Evaluating the Catholic Diocese of Goaso', pp. 3, 7.
[929] 'Evaluating the Catholic Diocese of Goaso', pp. 10, 12.
[930] Through a quota sampling, we targeted twelve (12) respondents from the clergy (including the diocesan bishop) and religious of each of the nine (9) dioceses. In addition, we interviewed the Emeritus Archbishop of Kumasi, Peter K. Sarpong, and the president of the Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference, Bishop Joseph Osei-Bonsu. Thus, the expected total number of respondents was 110. Of the expected total, the number of completed and returned questionnaires was sixty (60). In addition, we had personal interviews with forty-five

theoretical reception of the model church-*family of God* by the clergy and religious. From a total of 105 clergy and religious respondents across the nine dioceses of our field research, 64.8% have read or attended courses or seminars on Vatican II's *Lumen gentium* since their ordination or final profession of vows.[931] On the one hand, this seems to give a positive picture that numerically the majority of the local ecclesial leadership have updated themselves as far as *Lumen gentium* is concerned. On the other hand, one could say that it is quite alarming that more than a third (35.2%) of the key facilitators of the reception of the conciliar ecclesiology have themselves not updated their knowledge on it. [932] This seems to have affected their prioritization of the various conciliar ecclesial perspectives. Our study among the clergy- and religious-respondents revealed that 'church as communion' is *not explicitly* perceived as the primary model by the majority of them. In their answers to a multiple variable question, the prioritization of the ecclesiological perspectives was given as follows in the descending order: 'people of God' (89.5%), 'body of Christ' (87.6%), 'communion' (54.3%), 'sacrament' (48.6%), and 'institution' (20.0%).[933] Therefore, while on the one hand, the clergy and religious do not explicitly see 'church as communion' as the key model, on the other hand, one could deduce, by the categorization of Dulles (who places both 'people of God' and 'body of Christ' under 'communion') that 'church as communion' is *implicitly* perceived as the primary model.

Secondly, with regard to the reception of the contextualized primary model (church-*family of God*), the study revealed the following concerning the extent to which the clergy and religious have acquainted themselves with the first National Pastoral Congress (which sought to bring the first African Synod home to Ghana): 61.0% have read the *Instrumentum*

(45) persons. Thus the actual total number of clergy and religious respondents was 105. The details of the statistics of the clergy- and religious-respondents can be found in Appendix III.

[931] Table 29, Appendix V.

[932] Table 29, Appendix V.

[933] Table 30, Appendix V.

laboris, *Ecclesia in Ghana*, while a lesser number of them have read the post-congress *Pastoral Guidelines* (53.3%).[934] Once again, one may ask, how could the message of 'church as family of God' be effectively disseminated if close to half of the clergy and religious have not read the post-congress document?

The above picture does not necessarily imply that many of the clergy and religious do not understand the model church-*family of God*. On the contrary, thanks to the importance of the concept of family in the life experience of Africans (and for that matter, Ghanaians), all the respondents sufficiently articulated their understanding of the church as *family of God*. However, the lack of acquaintance with the above documents by some of the local leadership might be a contributing factor to the state of inadequate implementation of the church as family in practice, as indicated in subsection 6.3.5.

6.3.4 Reception in Theory by the Laity in Ghana

While one would not expect most lay faithful in Ghana to have read the documents of Vatican II because of the low inclination for reading and the relatively high degree of illiteracy (in English),[935] it was revealing to note that some (14.9%) of the 1,027[936] lay respondents did not even know that the council ever took place;[937] though this is not a high percentage compared to the 85.1% who have heard of Vatican II.[938] Furthermore, those lay faithful who acknowledged their lack of knowledge of the event of the first National

[934] Table 31, Appendix V.
[935] The documents of Vatican II available in Ghana are mainly in the English Language. In his article on the reception of Vatican II in Africa, Orobator mentions illiteracy as a factor hindering the process of reception [Orobator, '"After All, Africa is Largely a Non-literate Continent": The Reception of Vatican II in Africa', *Theological Studies*, 74 (2013), pp. 284-6, 291].
[936] Through a quota sampling, we targeted thirty (30) lay persons from each of the four (4) parishes selected from a diocese; thus, the expected sample size for each diocese was 120 lay people. This gave us an expected total sample size of 1,080 from the nine (9) dioceses. Of the expected total, the number of completed and returned questionnaires was 454. In addition, we had personal interviews with 186 persons. And there were also focus group discussions in some of the parishes; in all 387 lay persons took part. Therefore, the total actual sample size was 1,027. The details of the statistics of lay respondents can be found in Appendix IV.
[937] Some of the elderly ones were aware of the liturgical changes brought about by Vatican II, but they did not know that they were changes decreed by the council.
[938] Table 45, Appendix VI.

Pastoral Congress was even greater: 45.4%.[939] And this is even more alarming considering the fact that that was a local event which took place in the life time of the respondents.

As in the case of the clergy and religious, the above statistics do not imply that many of the lay faithful in Ghana do not understand the model church-*family of God*. On the contrary, thanks to the importance of the concept of family in the life experience of Ghanaians, most of the respondents sufficiently articulated their understanding of the church as *family of God*. However, the lack of acquaintance with the above events by some of the lay faithful might be a contributing factor to the state of inadequate implementation of the church as family in practice, as indicated in the next subsection.[940]

6.3.5 The Extent of Practical Implementations of the 'Family of God' Model in Ghana

We have already considered some attempts by the local Catholic Church to facilitate the implementation of the model church-*family of God* through the events and documents of the National Pastoral Congress, diocesan synods and diocesan pastoral congresses. In this subsection, therefore, we are focusing on the indicators (or the lack of them) of the practical implementation of the *family of God* model, especially on the parish and diocesan levels. We are seeking to locate the indicators or their absence in the areas of the active participation of all Christ's faithful, the sense of belonging felt among the laity and the sense of co-responsibility by the laity. These are areas which Ghanaian scholars have not yet considered.

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[939] Table 46, Appendix VI.

[940] Some contributing factors to this state of affair are: (a) the lack of well-spelt out and periodically reviewed diocesan and parish strategic pastoral plans geared towards the reception of the ecclesiology of Vatican II, the first African Synod and the first National Pastoral Congress; (b) the unsystematic ongoing formation of the clergy and religious; (c) the inadequate training and participation of the laity; (d) the insufficient animation by the clergy and religious, particularly, the lack of drive among some of them to disseminate and implement the recommendations of the first National Pastoral Congress.

(a) Active Participation by Christ's Faithful

We saw in chapter two that Vatican II encourages the formation of certain councils and committees on the parish, diocesan and national levels to promote greater and active lay participation in the life and mission of the church (*cf*. subsection 2.4.2); and that the 1983 *Code of Canon Law* has institutionalized some of these councils and committees (*cf*. subsection 2.4.3). Our field research, therefore, sought from the clergy, religious and lay respondents the extent of establishment of thirteen (13) councils and committees in the thirty-six parishes. Our findings of the establishment of these councils and committees are as follows: the parish pastoral council (89.8%), finance committee (89.6%), laity council (87.5%), youth council (85.5%), projects/building committee (75.0%), liturgical committee (68.8%), justice and peace committee (54.2%), catechetical committee (52.1%), education committee (41.7%), vocation committee (35.4%), health committee (29.2%), evangelization committee (20.9%), and biblical apostolate team (20.9%).[941]

While it may be encouraging to note that eight (8) out of the thirteen (13) have more than 50% establishment status, it is not good news to observe that fifty years since Vatican II called for greater participation of the lay faithful in the life and mission of the church, there are still priests running their parishes without some key councils and committees: parish pastoral council (10.2%), finance committee (10.4%), laity council (12.5%), youth council (14.5%), projects/building committee (25.0%), liturgical committee (31.2%), justice and peace committee (45.8%) and catechetical committee (47.9%).[942] Secondly, just about a third of the parishes have in place a system that involves lay participation in the promotion of priestly and religious vocations. Thirdly, our findings confirm the long standing gloomy picture of the involvement of very few lay faithful in the church's mission of primary

[941] Table 37, Appendix VI. Not all parishes have schools and hospitals and so the percentages indicated above may not be the true reflection of lay participation in these areas.
[942] These figures are deduced from Table 37 cited above.

evangelization: close to 80% of the parishes do not have evangelization or biblical apostolate team.[943]

There is the tendency to have structures in place while they do not function. So the research further sought to ascertain the functioning status of the established parish councils and committees. In this research, it was understood that an established council/committee was not functioning either if its last meeting was held more than a year ago or there existed a body or person who has taken over its functions. It was observed that there were instances of non-functioning in all the thirteen councils/committees, ranging from the least of 2.7% (pastoral council) to the maximum of 47.1% (education committee).[944] The usual reasons given for the non-functioning of councils/committees were clericalism (whereby priests decided on most issues or often undertook projects or programmes without consultation with lay members), passivity of the laity (whereby they still looked up to the priests to practically do everything)[945] and delinquency of members (some of whom complained of not having time to attend meetings, due to work schedules). Furthermore, in the case of education, the little or no influence that the committee could have on the established unfavourable policies and regulations of the Ghana Education Service was a major factor for its non-functionality.[946]

If a council/committee is established can it be said that it is functioning effectively simply because it has regular meetings? The answer could be no; so the research sought

[943] Table 37.
[944] Table 37.
[945] We observed that some lay faithful, especially in the rural areas, were passive in the decision-making process because of a high sense of reverence they give to the clergy – an attitude which could be expressed as: 'whatever God's specially chosen one says is right'. This attitude, which has been fostered by many centuries of clericalism (*cf*. P. Lwaminda, 'The Church as Family and the Quest for Justice and Peace in Africa' in McGarry et al (eds), *Inculturating the Church in Africa*, p. 265), is also rooted in the Ghanaian tradition of respect and reverence to the elders, and more so to traditional religious leaders (*cf*. Nukunya, *Tradition and Change in Ghana*, pp. 18, 68).
[946] Some of the above reasons expressed by interviewees were corroborated by the views of some participants at several focus group discussions. Parishes where group discussions took place have been indicated in Tables 13-21, Appendix IV.

further to know the extent to which lay members of the council/committee were involved in the decision-making process, and how satisfied they were with the level of clerical approval of their proposals. In this respect, our findings showed that while as much as 91.3% of the priests felt that they adequately involved the laity in the decision-making process in the parishes,[947] only 54.7% of the lay respondents felt they were sufficiently engaged in the process.[948] Secondly, while as much as 84.8% of the clergy indicated they usually approved the proposals of the laity,[949] only 51.3% of the lay respondents felt that their proposals were usually approved by the clergy for implementation.[950] What could account for this disparity in perspectives between the clergy and the lay faithful? On the part of the clergy, it seems that (working within the provisions of the constitutions of the parish pastoral councils) many of them felt that the mere participation in deliberations by the laity at meetings and their execution of tasks assigned them amounted to adequate involvement in the decision-making process. On the other hand, close to half of the lay respondents felt that the consultative nature of the councils/committees (can. 536§2) often made the deliberations of their meetings mere 'talk shops', enhancing clericalism while technically consigning the laity to a passive role.

Besides the few lay faithful representing the generality of laity on the councils/committees, how are the majority of them involved in the decision-making process? The study, therefore, further sought to know to what extent the representatives liaised with the church associations or communities they represented; secondly the use of open forums to facilitate the involvement of more lay people, and thirdly, the use of suggestion boxes for the same purpose. In the first case, it was found out that only a third (33.4%) of the lay representatives usually liaised between their associations/communities

[947] Table 27, Appendix V.
[948] Table 38, Appendix VI.
[949] Table 28, Appendix V.
[950] Table 39, Appendix VI.

and the councils/committees of which they are members;[951] often the council/committee meeting procedures did not afford members the opportunity to have prior discussion of the agenda with their respective associations. In the second case, it was found out that only a little over a third (35.0%) of the parishes did organize open forums at least twice a year.[952] And in the case of suggestion boxes only 13.3% of the lay respondents indicated their existence in their parishes.[953] Thus, while a few lay persons are becoming some kind of an 'elite ecclesial class' between the clergy and the rest of the laity, a majority of the latter seem to be less engaged in the whole decision-making and implementation process.

To examine the participation of the faithful on the diocesan level, we first ascertained the establishment of eighteen diocesan councils and committees: college of consultors (98.0%), laity council (98.0%), council of priests (96.1%), youth council (96.1%), vocations (96.1%), justice and peace (92.2%), catechetical (88.3%), women's council (86.4%), liturgical (84.5%), education (79.6%), finance (78.6%), health (72.8%), pastoral council (70.9%), projects/building (67.0%), communications (67.0%), pontifical mission societies (67.0%), biblical apostolate (65.0%), and evangelization (35.0%).[954] Thus, with the exception of the committee for evangelization, the councils/committees have been well established in the nine dioceses. On the other hand, it should be worrying that, as in the case of the parish level, little attention is being given to primary evangelization on the diocese level.

By and large, respondents indicated that most of the established diocesan councils/committees were functioning. However, over a fifth (22.2%) of the clergy and religious interviewed said that two key diocesan structures (college of consultors and

[951] Table 54, Appendix VI.
[952] Table 40, Appendix VI.
[953] Table 41, Appendix VI.
[954] Table 22, Appendix V.

council of priests) were not functioning satisfactorily.[955] Reasons given included the fact that proposals approved by some local ordinaries at meetings are later overturned after they had consulted some individuals outside the meetings. Secondly, in those cases where *Canon Law* required that bishops sought the consent of members of the college or council (can. 127; 500§2), these authorities sometimes ignored this procedure. Thirdly, sometimes members of the college or council became mere recipients of information on issues that the bishops had already made up their minds on.

Furthermore, by the prescription of *Canon Law*, the above council and college, that are pivotal for the running of a diocese, are made up of only the clergy (can. 495§1; 502§1). This, in some way, minimizes the active participation of the religious and the lay faithful in the governance of the diocese. Generally on the involvement of members of the various diocesan councils/committees in the decision-making process, while as much as 77.1% of the clergy respondents indicated that they were satisfactorily involved, [956] only 50.5% of the lay faithful said so; [957] and while 70.4% of the clergy said that their bishops usually approved the proposals of the councils/committees, [958] less than half (48.9%) of the lay respondents felt so.[959]

In line with Vatican II, the *Canon Law* encourages the holding of diocesan synods (can. 460-3). While, it might be encouraging to note that six out of the nine dioceses we surveyed have held synods, it is discouraging to observe that respondents indicated that the level of implementation of the 'Acts' of the synods is about only a third (34.2%).[960] This situation coupled with the fact that most of the dioceses did not have in place systems by

[955] Table 23, Appendix V.
[956] Table 23, Appendix V.
[957] Table 55, Appendix VI.
[958] Table 24, Appendix V.
[959] Table 56, Appendix VI.
[960] Table 32, Appendix V.

which to regularly solicit opinions of or suggestions from the larger body of the religious and the lay faithful made them (especially the latter) feel that the diocesan decision-making process and leadership was quite remote to them. This feeling of remoteness was felt even the more with regard to decision-making process and leadership on the national level.[961]

(b) Sense of Belonging of the Lay Faithful

In studying the sense of belonging in the local church as *family of God*, we limited ourselves to the lay faithful, as they are mainly those who feel like 'travellers in a passenger bus' (to use Archbishop Kpiebaya's imagery). Secondly, two main aspects were identified or distinguished: the spiritual and social aspects.[962] It was realized that while on the spiritual aspect (namely, by faith) almost every respondent felt that he/she belongs to the church as *family of God*, on the social (interpersonal and mutual support) level, less than half of the respondents said they experience the sense of belonging as in a natural family. More specifically, on the one hand, as many as 99.7% of the respondents believed that they belong to the church as *family of God*,[963] because of their common faith, especially, in the same triune God; a common baptism; the oneness felt during eucharistic celebrations, in which all listen to the same word of God and partake in a common 'meal'; the reception of the same sacraments; and other common religious practices. These respondents mentioned the strong sense of family-hood they felt during the celebrations of special parish, diocesan, national or universal feasts (e.g. Corpus Christi).

[961] Table 57, Appendix VI. On the national, diocesan and parishes levels, it seems there has been no concerted effort, since the first African Synod, to reform structures and procedures of ecclesial governance with the view to enhancing the effective participation of the lay faithful as warranted by the model church-*family of God*.
[962] *cf*. B. Joinet, 'Building Christian Communities', section II, 1, *The Wa Review*, 1 (1975) [This 1975 review has no pages].
[963] Table 50, Appendix VI.

On the other hand, only 49.2% felt the sense of belonging on the social level.[964] Many of these respondents were in the rural or relatively rural parishes,[965] where there was already a close natural bonding among the village- or town-folks.[966] Some others who felt the sense of family-hood were either active members in some church associations or had well-established SCCs in their parishes.[967] Still others among these were active members of parish councils or committees. Thus, the more lay faithful are encouraged and given opportunity to actively participate in the life and mission of the church (*cf*. subsection 6.3.5a) the greater their sense of belonging as a family.

However, as it might be obvious, there were over 50% of the lay respondents who were not content with the depth of social fellowship in the church.[968] These gave various reasons including the following: they were not adequately engaged in the decision-making process of the church; the welfare support (to young couples, the sick, aged, needy and bereaved families) in their parishes fell short of the support given by other churches to their members; the inadequate sense of being a brother's/sister's keeper among church members, and therefore the lack of mutual visits to the sick or members who absented themselves from Sunday Masses; there was a lack of or an inadequate procedure for welcoming and integrating new members, and especially in the urban areas those who did not belong to any lay associations felt 'lost in the crowds' of parishes with large membership.[969] In addition, some of them felt that sometimes the priest (the 'father' figure) in the parish appeared

[964] Table 50, Appendix VI.
[965] Table 52, Appendix VI.
[966] *cf*. Nukunya, *Tradition and Change in Ghana*, p. 18.
[967] Tables 51 and 53, Appendix VI. In a few parishes, the sense of belonging was being fostered through 'day born groups', namely the grouping of church members according to the day of the week on which they were born.
[968] Table 50, Appendix VI.
[969] *cf*. EIG 82.

remote to them; some of these mentioned that they had been in their parishes for over ten years and no priest had ever visited their homes.[970]

Furthermore, it was found out that most (76.9%) of those who did not feel a sense of belonging were in parishes with no SCCs.[971] Despite the call by the first African Synod, first National Pastoral Congress, some diocesan synods or pastoral congresses to establish SCCs, only 30.8% of respondents indicated that these had been established in their parishes.[972] Moreover, nearly 55% of the established SCCs were either not functioning or extinct.[973] Some of the reasons given for this state of affairs included: the formation of SCCs was not a policy in most of the dioceses;[974] most of the chief facilitators (the priests) did not show much interest in the formation and fostering of SCCs; often when a newly appointed parish priest who had no interest in this pastoral tool replaced a keen promoter the SCCs ran aground;[975] inadequate training of lay leaders and the lack of their commitment; lack of knowledge and understanding of the whole SCC concept by the general body of the lay faithful; challenges of suitable meeting places and convenient meeting time; and, in a few places, pastors were using the SCCs as fund raising avenues for

[970] The above reasons given by some interviewees and in the some responses to the questionnaire were corroborated by views expressed during focus group discussions.
[971] Table 51, Appendix VI. This is not to say that the sense of we-feeling can be enhanced only through the formation and fostering of SCCs, for we have already mentioned other reasons why the social sense of belonging is low. We however have the opinion that SCCs have a good potential in contributing towards building up or strengthening this sense of family-hood in the parishes. Our position is supported by EIG 81-2, 85.
[972] Table 47, Appendix VI. Most (90.4%) of these SCCs were established after the first African Synod (Table 49, Appendix VI).
[973] Table 48, Appendix VI.
[974] Only two of the bishops we interviewed stated that they have a diocesan policy for the formation of SCCs in their dioceses, and they are personally involvement in its implementation: Archbishop Matthias K. Nketsiah of Cape Coast Archdiocese and Bishop Anthony Adanuty of Keta-Akatsi. The former was interviewed on 6 May 2013 in his office at the Archdiocesan Secretariat, Cape Coast. The latter was interviewed on 17 June 2013 in his office at the Diocesan Secretariat, Torve. Regarding the state of SCCs in Wa Diocese see subsection 6.3.2c.
[975] *cf*. J. Healey, 'Four Africans Evaluate SCCs in East Africa', *AFER* 29 (1987), pp. 266-77; E.E. Uzukwu, 'The Birth and Development of a Local Church: Difficulties and Signs of Hope' in G. Alberigo & A.N. Mushete (eds), *Towards the African Synod* (London: SCM, 1992), pp. 17-8.

church projects, instead of a pastoral tool for enhancing fellowship, mutual support and evangelization.

(c) Sense of Co-Responsibility by the Lay Faithful

By the sense of co-responsibility we mean the feeling among or attitude of all the faithful (bishops, priests, religious and laity) that they are jointly (though in varied ways) responsible for the promotion and fostering of the life and mission of the church. This calls for more collaboration and cooperation among all the faithful to achieve the mission entrusted to the church they all equally belong to.[976]

As in the case of the sense of belonging, here too our research focused on the sense of co-responsibility of the laity, because they are those who have been left out of 'ecclesial responsibility' for centuries. Secondly, the research distinguished between two kinds of sense of co-responsibility. This time, however, it was not in terms of spiritual and social aspects. We rather looked at how *convinced* respondents were about being co-responsible, and how *satisfied* they were with the extent to which they have been empowered (i.e. trained and officially mandated) to be co-responsible. Let us first consider respondents' conviction about their co-responsibility. The sense of belonging to a group and the opportunity to participate in its activities determine, to a large extent, how a member feels about his/her co-responsibility for the mission of the group. It was, therefore, interesting to find out that despite the low *social* sense of belonging (49.3%) and the just above average (54.6%) level of participation in decision-making, as much as 72.7% of the lay faithful were convinced about their co-responsibility for the life and mission of the church.[977] This situation seems to be accounted for by the fact that the spiritual sense of belonging is almost

[976] *cf*. Lwaminda, 'The Church as Family', pp. 265-7; *cf*. Orobator, 'A Church in Dialogue', p. 40; *cf*. L. Swidler, *Making the Church Our Own: How We Can Reform the Catholic Church from the Ground Up* (Plymouth: Sheed and Ward, 2007), p. viii.
[977] Table 43, Appendix VI.

optimal (99.7%).[978] This notwithstanding, the conviction about co-responsibility among the lay faithful could be further strengthened if the *social* aspect of the sense of belonging is improved upon.

With regard to the second aspect of co-responsibility, less than half (42.0%) of the lay respondents indicated that they felt empowered by the leadership of the church to be jointly responsible for the life and mission of the church.[979] And a still lesser percentage (11.7%) of the laity felt empowered for the specific mission of primary evangelization;[980] this situation is corroborated by the earlier finding that the committee to facilitate evangelization could be found in only 20.9% of the parishes (*cf.* subsection 6.3.5a).[981] Some respondents were of the opinion that the low degree of lay empowerment may be due to the fact that there is no comprehensive strategic system in place to regularly recruit the majority of the laity, adequately train them, aid them, commission them, direct them, monitor their progress, and re-train them at regular intervals to ensure a better fulfilment of the mission of the church.

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[978] Table 50, Appendix VI.
[979] Table 43, Appendix VI.
[980] Table 43, Appendix VI. The majority of the 11.7% (=75/640) lay respondents who felt empowered for primary evangelization were *catechists*. That is, 68 out of the 75 lay respondents were catechists. Furthermore, it could be said that generally the Catholic Church (clergy, religious, catechists and other laity) in Ghana has a 'maintenance' attitude towards her ministry. This is a major factor accounting for the dwindling percentage of Catholics in Ghana: 15.3% (2000 National Census) to 13.1% (2010 National Census), http://www.statsghana.gov.gh/docfiles/2010phc/Census2010_Summary_report_of_final_results.pdf, see Table 16, on p. 54 (accessed on 24 December 2013). In 1993, during the centenary of the Catholic Church in Accra Archdiocese, the then prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelization of the Peoples, Cardinal Jozef Tomko cautioned the priests and religious of Accra against this 'maintenance ministry': 'Although today you are marking this centenary, it does not mean that the work of proclamation and evangelization is ended. No! You must resist the temptation of merely being a *maintenance church*. You must continually renew yourselves as an evangelizing church' (Tomko, 'Address to Priests and Religious at the Sacred Heart Parish, Derby Avenue', August 1993, Accra, in T. Kwao-Nyaku (ed.), *Memoirs of an Era: Centenary of the Catholic Church in the Archdiocese of Accra* (Accra: Archdiocesan Centenary Preparatory Committee, 1993), p. 65.
[981] Table 37, Appendix VI.

6.4 Conclusion

We sought to depict (in this chapter) how the conciliar primary model of communion is being received as church-*family of God*, in theology and praxis, by the Catholic Church in Africa and Ghana in particular. In doing so, we presented the first African Synod as a *watershed* in the process of reception. Consequently, for the reception on the continental level, we considered the situations prior to, during and after the synod. In the first phase, there were a few theological initiatives to contextualize the 'communion' model as 'church as clan/tribe' (Mulago) and later as 'church with a negro face' (Malula). Meanwhile, on the practical level there were attempts, especially in East Africa and Burkina Faso, to experience the 'church as communion' through the promotion and fostering of SCCs. In Burkina Faso, there emerged from this pastoral communal experience the theology of the church as *family of God*. It was, in a sense, the beginning of a 'first moment' (Gaillardetz) of reception by the bishops of Burkina Faso.

With the endorsement by the bishops of Africa and John Paul II, the above 'first moment' of reception came to fruition at the first African Synod. The bishops of Africa and the pope recommended the model church-*family of God* to the whole church in Africa and called for its theological elaboration (second phase). This magisterial call ushered in a 'second moment' (Gaillardetz) of reception of the familial model (third phase). For the theological works of this 'second moment' of reception, we limited ourselves to the scholarly works of four Ghanaians: Tengan, Appiah-Kubi, Tanye and Awinongya. Though they have different objectives, approaches and emphases, we discern from their works several salient points including the following. Firstly, they hold that the African (Ghanaian) concept of family is appropriate for expressing the understanding of the church as communion, though its disvalues need to be transformed in the light of the gospel.

Secondly, the church as *family of God* is trinitarian in character. Thirdly, God the Father is the unique father of this 'family'. Fourthly, out of the love of the triune God, we become members of this 'family' through the mysteries of incarnation and redemption of Jesus Christ and the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit. Fifthly, in the only begotten Son of God, we become adopted sons and daughters of God, and therefore brothers and sisters. Sixthly, the *family of God* transcends all nuclear and extended families, clans, tribes, etc. that are based on human blood-ties and adoptions; for through faith and baptism (sacraments) we have a common blood – that of Jesus Christ – running through the 'veins' of all.

Furthermore, we prefaced our consideration of the 'second moment' of the reception of the model church-*family of God* in the local church (Ghana) with a look at its state of reception prior to the first African Synod. It seems there was no explicit theology of the church as *family of God* in this phase and only few parishes had established SCCs. Since the synod, however, there have been good attempts at reception *in theory* through pastoral letters of the bishops' conference, synods and pastoral congresses, though the degree of reception varies from diocese to diocese and parish to parish. Secondly, all the clergy- and religious-respondents and the majority of the lay respondents could articulate the understanding of the church as *family of God*. This notwithstanding, the reception *in practice* is lagging behind in several respects, three areas of which are the concern of this study: the extent of active participation by all Christ's faithful, the sense of belonging among the lay faithful and the sense of co-responsibility of the lay faithful. In the first case, whereas the majority of the clergy felt that they were sufficiently engaging the lay faithful in decision-making process of the church, about half of the lay respondents felt otherwise; besides, there has been no real reform of structures and procedures of ecclesial governance to enhance effective lay participation. As regards the sense of belonging, we noticed that,

while the majority of the lay respondents *believed* that they belong to the church as one family, less than half of them were satisfied with the *social* aspect of interpersonal relationships and mutual support; and less than a third of the respondents indicated that they had SCCs in their parishes to promote and foster this social aspect of belonging. Thirdly, whereas the majority of the lay respondents were convinced that they were jointly (with the clergy) responsible for the life and mission of the church, less than half of them felt adequately empowered to be thus co-responsible; and a far less percentage (11.7%) indicated that they felt empowered for the specific mission of primary evangelization.

Besides contending with the disvalues (e.g. false solidarity or ethnocentrism, excessive prestige, injustice and violence, and discrimination against women) associated with the African (Ghanaian) concept of family, one has to deal with some weaknesses found in some versions of the theology of the church as *family of God*.[982] In the first place, there is the tendency to limit the articulation of the mystery of the church to those analogies which the notion of family affords the theologian. This often leads to the neglect of certain important elements of the mystery of the church. For instance, unable to identify a feature of the natural family which could serve as an analogy for the Holy Spirit, some theologians (e.g. Tengan, Tanye and Awinongya) have insufficiently articulated the pneumatological character of the church. On the other hand, others have over-stretched the capacity of the family-analogy particularly regarding the christological character of the church. In this regard, some of them have uncritically perceived Jesus Christ as the ancestor or proto-ancestor of the family of God (Nyamiti, Tanye and Awinongya). In short, the trinitarian character of the church is sometimes not well accounted for.

Finally, the Ghanaian scholars do not demonstrate how the model church-*family of God* is complemented by other models of the church. Even those scholars (Benson and

[982] *cf.* A.G. Msafiri, 'The Church as Family Model: Its Strengths and Weaknesses', *AFER* 40 (1998), pp. 302.

Hankomoone) who attempt to harmonize the models do so in a unidirectional way. This thesis, therefore, seeks to harmonize the models in a dual-direction manner (*cf*. chapter seven).

CHAPTER SEVEN: SOME PROSPECTS OF THE CONCILIAR ECCLESIOLOGY FOR THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN GHANA

7.1 Introduction

In this chapter we wish to consider some prospects of the communion-based 'mosaic' ecclesiology of Vatican II for the Catholic Church in Ghana. While mindful of the fact that the Catholic Church in Ghana is a local church within the universal church,[983] this chapter focuses on the local church.[984] Our presentation consists of two main sections. The first section is a theoretical construction patterned on the process of harmonization of Dulles' models of the church that was developed in chapter four of this study.[985] In this case, however, the model church-*family of God* assumes a pivotal position as the contextual expression of the primary model of communion. In the process, there is an attempt to compensate for some weaknesses found in certain versions of the ecclesiology of *family of God*.[986] Secondly, by harmonizing the model church-*family of God* with the other models of the church, we are responding to a call of the fathers of the first African Synod and John Paul II: 'It is earnestly to be hoped that theologians in Africa will work out the theology of the church as family with all riches contained in this concept, *showing its complementarity with other images of the church*'.[987] Thirdly, there is an attempt to use the harmonization

[983] *cf*. C. McGarry, V. Kalawa et al, 'The Synod's Vision of an African Church' in C. McGarry (ed.), *What Happened at the African Synod?* (Nairobi: Paulines, 1995), pp. 162-3.
[984] Our intention is therefore far from proposing an 'ecclesial nationalism' [comparable to the 19th century Gallicalism: B.P. Prusak, *The Church Unfinished* (New York: Paulist, 2004), p. 255] for the Catholic Church in Ghana. We firmly hold onto the official teaching position whereby the universal-local church relationship is based on the communion of various dioceses across the world with the See of Rome having the primacy (*cf.* subsections 4.4.2, 4.4.5).
[985] We do not intend to present a detailed theology of the church as *family of God,* for this has been provided for by many African scholars, including the Ghanaian authors whose works were reviewed in chapter six.
[986] *cf*. McGarry et al, 'The Synod's Vision of an African Church', p. 164.
[987] First Special Assembly for Africa of the Synod of Bishops (1994), *Propositio* no. 8; *Ecclesia in Africa*, no. 63. Henceforth this 'Special Assembly' will be simply referred to as 'First African Synod', and *Ecclesia in Africa*, will be abbreviated as EIA.

process – especially its 'symbiotic' aspect – to offset some of the disvalues of the traditional Ghanaian (African) concept of family.[988]

The second main section of this chapter is more practical. This is in line with a recent admonition by Pope Francis: theologians 'must always remember that the church and theology exist to evangelize, and not be content with a *desk-bound* theology'.[989] And more specifically on the way of doing African ecclesiology after the first African Synod, Agbonkhianmeghe E. Orobator writes: 'The synod recommends and vigorously encourages the development of an African ecclesiology based on the church as family. A word of caution is in order here: *this development is not just to be theological or conceptual*; it must also extend to the roots of people's lives, their *concrete experience* of living the Christian faith.'[990] Consequently, in the light of some of the shortcomings of the practical reception of the model church-*family of God* in Ghana (*cf*. subsection 6.3.5), some suggestions have been made to enhance reception in the following three areas: the sense of belonging of Christ's faithful, their sense of co-responsibility, and their active participation.

7.2 Harmonization of the 'Family of God' Model with Dulles' Models

7.2.1 'Family of God' as a Contextual Expression of Communion Model

In this study, the model church-*family of God* is perceived, not as an entirely distinct model, but as a contextual expression of the primary model of communion. There is, therefore, an attempt to demonstrate (in this subsection) how the *family of God* model could be used to articulate the four main dimensions of church as communion: vertical-invisible, vertical-visible, horizontal-invisible and horizontal-visible (*cf*. subsections 4.2.1-4.2.4).

[988] Ethnocentrism (one of the disvalues) has been dealt with extensively by the Ghanaian scholar, G.K. Tanye, *The Church-as-Family and Ethnocentrism in Sub-Saharan Africa* (Münster: LIT, 2010). Therefore in this chapter we shall only indicate how the harmonization process could address the issue of ethnocentrism.
[989] Pope Francis, Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii gaudium*, 24 November 2013, no. 133.
[990] A.E. Orobator, 'A Church in Dialogue as the Family of God' in C. McGarry (ed.) *What Happened at the African Synod?,* p. 50.

Secondly, with regard to the first dimension (vertical-invisible), there is an indication as to how the model church-*family of God* could be complemented by the three metaphors (people of God, body of Christ and temple of the Spirit) which have been subsumed under the model of communion.

(a) Vertical-Invisible Dimension

Usually in the traditional Ghanaian concept of family, the origin of the family is traced to a founding *human* ancestor (*cf*. section 5.6). However, in employing the Ghanaian concept of family to articulate a contextual expression of the communion model, it should be understood that the origin of the mystery of the church (which the familial model elucidates) is traceable, not to a mere human founder, but to the triune God. That is, the *family of God* originates from the loving and gratuitous initiative of God and it is patterned on the communion that exists among the three divine Persons:[991] 'We are the family of God: this is the good news! The same blood flows in our veins, and it is the blood of Jesus Christ. The same Spirit gives us life, and it is the Holy Spirit, the infinite fruitfulness of divine love.'[992] The church understood as *family of God* is, therefore, *theo*-logical, christological and pneumatological. *Theo*-logically it has to be emphasized that God the Father is the

[991] The trinitarian character of the church as explained in subsection 4.2.1 applies here also; *cf*. Appiah-Kubi, *L'Église, Famille de Dieu*, pp. 97-9, 164-7; *cf*. Orobator, 'A Church in Dialogue', p. 38; *cf*. C. Hankomoone, 'Church as Family of God: An African Expression of Ecclesial Communion and Mission', Ph.D. thesis (Pontificia Universitas Gregoriana, Rome 2009), pp. 33-6.

[992] First African Synod, *Final Message*, no. 25, http://www.afrikaworld.net/synod/message.htm (accessed on 12 July 2013); *cf*. English Group D Report at the same synod: 'The concept of a large extended family in African culture could serve as a model of church-family. It should however be based on the trinitarian model' [www.afrikaworld.net/synod/group-report.htm#004 (accessed on 12 July 2013)]; the Italian Group Report is even clearer in stating that the point of departure is the Holy Trinity and not the African family: 'God's church-family has positive echoes in the African culture. However it is founded [by] and modelled [on] the Trinity (*cf*. LG 4), and not on the human family which is also called to model itself on this. Therefore, the model of the church-family of God can be privileged, without restricting itself' [www.afrikaworld.net/synod/group-report.htm#012 (accessed on 12 July 2013; *cf*. SECAM, *Pastoral Letter, The Church as Family of God* (Accra: SECAM, 1998), nos 3.8-3.9; *cf*. J.O. Faniran, 'Journeying Together into the 21st Century', *AFER*, 37 (1995), p. 40].

unique father of all the members of the *family of God* (*cf*. subsection 6.2.3b).[993] None of the human members, therefore, can theologically be called a father to the others: 'Do not call anyone on earth your father; for one only is your Father, he who is in heaven' (Matt. 23:9).[994]

Useful in explaining further the theo-logical character of the church is the consideration of how this *family of God* model is complemented by the theology of the church as 'people of God'.[995] As God is the unique Creator-Father of the church perceived as 'people of God', so is he to the family of God. Secondly, while it may not be evident that fundamental to the existence of the family of God is the New Covenant, the metaphor of 'people of God' brings this out.[996]

Having a common paternity in God the Father, all the members of the family of God are thus his sons and daughters of God; and this is so thanks to the covenant-sealing incarnatio-paschal mystery of the only begotten Son of God. This christological character of the church, which is very expressive in the metaphor of the church as 'body of Christ', could help us appreciate the fact that the family of God is not just any family nor a family originating from God in a vague sense, but that which owes its existence to the specific

[993] *cf*. Appiah-Kubi, *L'Église, Famille de Dieu*, pp. 200-9; *cf*. C. Mhagama, 'The Church as a Family of God: A Biblical Foundation' in P. Ryan (ed.) *The Model of 'Church-as-Family': Meeting the African Challenge* (Nairobi: CUEA, 1999), p. 40; *cf*. M.G. Nwagwu, 'Communion and Self-reliance: Signs of Church as God's Family in Africa', *AFER*, 42 (2000), p. 19.

[994] A human member of the church-*family of God* could be referred to as a 'father' only in a symbolic sense. Clericalism (which is a paternalistic arrogation of the position of the heavenly Father) is therefore a distortion of the symbolic fatherly role expected of priests [*cf*. Mhagama, 'The Church as a Family of God', p. 45; *cf*. First African Synod, *Relatio ante disceptationem*, no. 9, http://www.afrikaworld.net/synod/thiandoum1.htm (accessed on 12 July 2013); *cf*. *Relatio post disceptationem*, no. 6, http://www.afrikaworld.net/synod/thiandoum3.htm (accessed on 12 July 2013); *cf*. *Final Message*, no. 26; *cf*. Orobator, 'A Church in Dialogue', p. 40].

[995] The English Group A Report (First African Synod) states: 'The concepts of church as a people of God and as family appeal to the African who believes in the extended family. The church as people of God and as family of God are not contradictory but complementary' [www.afrikaworld.net/synod/group-report.htm#001 (accessed on 12 July 2013); *cf*. Mhagama, 'The Church as a Family of God', pp. 37-8].

[996] *cf*. SECAM, *Instumentum Laboris, Church as Family of God* (Accra: SECAM, 1998), nos 203-6.

mystery of salvation wrought in Jesus Christ.[997] Secondly, complementing the family of God with the 'body of Christ' highlights the fact that the church is permanently bonded to Christ, her Lord and Saviour (*cf*. subsection 4.2.1).[998]

As sons and daughters, the members of the church are brothers and sisters among themselves. This common filiation in the unique begotten Son of God and the common fraternity in the same unique divine and eldest brother (Jesus Christ) of the members of the family of God is effected by the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit. This pneumatological nature of the church as family of God is more evident when the metaphor of the 'temple of the Holy Spirit' is employed to call attention to the ecclesial indwelling of the Spirit – the source of faith, holiness, love and unity of the church (*cf*. subsection 4.2.1).

Consequently, the ethnocentrism associated with the traditional Ghanaian concept of family could be offset if the church is seen, not as limited to a natural family, clan, tribe or race, but rather as the family of the one pilgrim people of the one Creator-Father, whose sons and daughters the members equally are; as the family of the brothers and sisters of the body of Christ; and as the family in which the one sanctifying Spirit of God indwells as in a temple.[999] In this vein, a vision of the church that could be fostered in the local church is: we, though many (ethnic-wise), are one family of the triune God, bonded together by one love and looking forward with one faith and one hope to participating in the full, eschatological union with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This vision calls for cultivating a

[997] *cf*. SECAM, *Instumentum Laboris, Church as Family of God,* nos 207-15.
[998] *cf*. LG no. 4; *cf*. *Final Message*, nos 3, 24, 25; *cf*. *Relatio post disceptationem*, no. 3; *cf*. English Group D Report, French Group D Report [www.afrikaworld.net/synod/group-report.htm#009 (accessed on 12 July 2013)], French Group E Report [www.afrikaworld.net/synod/group-report.htm#010 (accessed on 12 July 2013)]; *Ghana Bishops' Speak*, vol. 2, p. 61; *cf*. *Acts of the First Wa Diocesan Synod*, no.14; *cf*. Orobator, 'A Church in Dialogue', p. 38; *cf*. McGarry et al, 'The Synod's Vision of an African Church', pp. 178-9.
[999] *cf.* French Group D Report.

stronger sense of belonging among all members of the local church in Ghana,[1000] as well as discouraging any form of ethnocentrism.

(b) Vertical-Visible Dimension

The traditional Ghanaian concept of family entails a relationship with family 'deity' or 'deities' and the performance of communal religious ceremonies or rituals, often as a means of sustaining that relationship and asking for favours (*cf*. section 5.4).[1001] Participation in such communal rituals strengthens the bond among members of the family. This could be used analogically to express the vertical-visible dimension of the church as communion. That is, it could be said that in the common participation in some spiritual goods (e.g. a common faith, the celebration of the eucharist), the members of the family of God simultaneously realize a vertical communion with God and a visible communion among themselves (*cf*. subsection 4.2.2).[1002] This faith experience is very expressive of the church as family of God; and it was very evident in the reasons respondents gave for believing that they belong to the church which is a family of God (*cf*. subsection 6.3.5b).

(c) Horizontal-Invisible Dimension

According to an aspect of the traditional Ghanaian concept of family, membership includes the ancestors (*cf*. section 5.5). Referring to Africans in general, John Paul II affirms this point: 'they believe intuitively that the dead continue to live and remain in communion with them.'[1003] By analogy, the ancestral membership of the family could be used to express the invisible part of the communion of saints, namely the saints in heaven

[1000] Some suggestions in this regard have been made in subsection 7.3.1.
[1001] *cf*. P.K. Sarpong, *Ghana in Retrospect: Some Aspects of Ghanaian Culture* (Tema: Ghana Publishing Corporation, 1974), pp, 14-9; *cf*. G.K. Nukunya, *Tradition and Change in Ghana: An Introduction to Sociology* (Accra: Ghana Universities, 2003), pp. 56-7.
[1002] *cf*. Orobator, 'A Church in Dialogue', p. 39;
[1003] EIA 43; Hankomoone rightly notes that the pope sees this as a preparation for belief in the communion of saints (Hankomoone, 'Church as Family of God', p. 55).

and souls in purgatory. That is, as in the traditional family, the church as family of God is made up of, not only the human members whom we can see (i.e. visible), but also of human members (horizontal) whom we cannot see (invisible) because they are in heaven or in purgatory (*cf*. subsection 4.2.3).[1004] However, there is the need to clarify that the 'ancestors' of the family of God are not those recognized as such simply by the criteria of African ancestorship,[1005] but they are those who by faith in God and love of neighbour have, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, 'washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb' (Rev. 7:14). That is, on the one hand, since God wills all men and women to be saved through Jesus Christ (*cf*. 1 Tim. 2:4-6), 'we ought to believe that the Holy Spirit in a manner known only to God offers to everyone the possibility of being associated with this [Christ's] paschal mystery'.[1006] In this light it could be said that some of the African ancestors who preceded the era of Jesus Christ or who did not express explicit faith in him, but who did please God might have been saved.

On the other hand, one needs to avoid those generalizations that seem to say that all the African ancestors have been saved and are part of the saints in heaven or souls in purgatory. Here, may it suffice to cite two statements of Cornelius Hankomoone to illustrate such generations. Firstly, he holds that 'an African Christian longs to know that

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[1004] *cf*. C. Nyamiti, 'Some Items on African Family Ecclesiology' in P. Ryan (ed.), *The Model of 'Church-as-Family'*, pp. 1-10; *cf*. Nyamiti, 'The Church as Christ's Ancestral Mediation: An Essay on African Ecclesiology' in J.N.K. Mugambi & L. Magesa (eds), *The Church in African Christianity: Innovative Essays in Ecclesiology* (Nairobi: Initiatives, 1990), p. 129; *cf*. Hankomoone, 'Church as Family of God', p. 55.

[1005] Not to talk of the whole process of the canonization of saints whose intercession could be invoked 'publicly', the three criteria of ancestorship mentioned in section 5.5 would not suffice to make one a saint (Christian 'ancestor'). Regarding the first condition, one could say that neither age nor marital status contributes towards sainthood; for Catholics believe that there are children, celibates and consecrated virgins in heaven. When, it comes to the second condition, the moral standards for 'exemplary life' of Christians may differ from that of the traditional Ghanaian worldview; for instance, whereas Christianity upholds monogamy, polygamy is cherished in the traditional Ghanaian culture. With regard to third condition, St. Damian of Molokai, for instance, who died a leper after great care for lepers, might be disqualified from being an ancestor. Over and above these points one becomes a saint (Christian ancestor), first and foremost by the merits of the redemptive mystery of Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit [*cf*. the doctoral thesis of a Ghanaian Catholic priest-scholar, J.T.A. Ankrah, 'African Traditional Perspectives and the Teaching of the Roman Catholic Church on Supernatural Beings in the Southern Dioceses of Ghana' Ph.D. thesis (University of London, London 1987); especially in pp. 225-37, where is treats 'Ancestors and Saints'].

[1006] *Gaudium et spes*, no. 22; *cf*. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 1260; *cf*. EIA 27.

his ancestors are resting in communion with Christ and to perceive Christian discipleship as the way to communion with the ancestors'.[1007] Secondly, he states that 'it is *only* when ancestors are understood to be in communion with the Son of God that an African person would have no desire to go anywhere else for communion since communion with the ancestors would only be found in Jesus Christ'.[1008] Besides apparently presuming – and wrongly so – that *all* traditional African ancestors qualify as 'Christian ancestors' (saints and holy souls) in the sight of God, Hankomoone seems to ignore the fact that there are African Christians today who have been so 'westernized' that they have no devotional or religious connections with traditional African ancestors. In fact there are African Christians who see ancestral veneration as 'fetish'.[1009]

Another point in the contextualization is that, just as in the Ghanaian tradition, ancestors are believed to aid the earthly members of the family,[1010] so in the church-family of God the 'ancestors' in glory intercede for graces to aid their pilgrim brothers and sisters, who journey towards the eschatological fulfilment. Among these 'ancestors' in glory Mary, the mother of Jesus who has become the mother of all other human members of the family

[1007] Hankomoone, 'Church as Family of God', p. 58.
[1008] Hankomoone, 'Church as Family of God', p. 56; in pp. 57-8, he cites E.W. Fashole-Luke and Archbishop E. Milingo who make similar statements [E.W. Fashole-Luke, 'Ancestor Veneration and the Communion of Saints' in M.E. Glasswell & E.W. Fashole-Luke (eds), *New Testament Christianity for Africa and the World* (London: 1974), p. 210; E. Milingo, *The World in Between: Christian Healing and the Struggle for Spiritual Survival* (New York: Orbis, 1984), p. 100] to support his position.
[1009] Ankrah has made an in-depth study of the debate on Ghanaian ancestral veneration and its accompanying ritual of libation (Ankrah, 'African Traditional Perspectives', see especially pp. 132-77, 207-42; *cf*. SECAM, *Pastoral Letter*, *Church as Family of God*, no. 4.6; *cf*. EIG 132-41).
[1010] Once again, we are making this point only by way of an analogy; for in reality, it is generally held that traditional Ghanaian ancestors assist their family members on earth by their own power and not through an intercessory role as Christian saints do (*cf*. section 5.5). Ankrah rightly notes this point. Furthermore, he holds that if the pouring of libation should be Christianized then, among other things, the traditional belief in the 'autonomous' powers of the ancestor should be purified in the light of the gospel of Christ. Thus, he says, the ancestors, like saints, should be seen as playing an intercessory role which is Christo-centric. While we agree with Ankrah on his Christo-centric position, we realize that he does not mention the Holy Spirit in the *sample prayer* (p. 210) he proposes for a possible Christian libation (Ankrah, 'African Traditional Perspectives', pp. 166-9, 177, 209-10).

of God, plays a special intercessory role and is their eschatological pattern (*cf*. subsection 4.2.3).[1011]

(d) Horizontal-Visible Dimension

The values of communal worship, mutual support, solidarity, warmth in human relationships, mutual trust and acceptance, dialogue, collective ownership and division of labour, checks and balances on leadership, and conflict resolution mechanisms that are characteristic of the Ghanaian concept of extended family could help express the horizontal-visible dimension of the church as communion (*cf*. subsection 4.2.4) in a manner that could suggest ways of enhancing the sense of belonging,[1012] co-responsibility as well as the full and active participation of all the faithful in the life and mission of the local church.[1013] This, however, may not be achieved to an appreciable extent if some (if not all) of the traditional Ghanaian familial disvalues are not transformed in the light of the gospel of Jesus Christ.[1014] Therefore besides the initial indication given above on how to address ethnocentrism, we suggest, in our harmonization of *family of God* model with Dulles' models of discipleship, institution, sacrament, herald and servant, how some disvalues (e.g. paternalism, injustice and violence, and discrimination against women) of the Ghanaian concept of family could be addressed.[1015]

Furthermore, as in the case of the horizontal-visible dimension of the church as communion (*cf*. subsection 4.2.4), it has to be mentioned that the horizontal-visible dimension of the model church-*family of God* has several sub-dimensions including the

[1011] *cf*. SECAM, *Instrumentum Laboris*, *Church as Family of God*, no. 128.
[1012] *cf*. Orobator, 'A Church in Dialogue', pp. 42-3.
[1013] *cf*. EIG 233-4; *cf*. Italian Group Report; *cf*. SECAM, *Instrumentum Laboris*, *Church as Family of God*, nos 52-60; *cf*. SECAM, *Pastoral Letter, Church as Family of God*, nos 4.1-4.4, 4.7-4.8; *cf*. McGarry et al, 'The Synod's Vision of an African Church', p. 164.
[1014] *cf*. SECAM, *Instumentum Laboris*, *Church as Family of God*, nos 193-201; *cf*. SECAM, *Pastoral Letter*, *Christ Our Peace (Eph. 2:14): The Church-as-Family of God, Place and Sacrament of Pardon, Reconciliation and Peace in Africa* (Accra: SECAM, 2001), nos 65-76.
[1015] *cf*. SECAM, *Instumentum Laboris*, *Church as Family of God*, nos 71-86; *cf*. EIG 235.

following: the categories of clergy, laity and religious; the universal-local churches relationship; the communion among the bishops; and unity among all Christians or ecumenism. Some of these sub-dimensions have been incorporated into the process of harmonization with the other models of Dulles.

7.2.2 'Family of God' and Discipleship Models

In view of what has been said already, in the present and the subsequent harmonization, the model church-*family of God* should be understood as a contextual expression of the communion model. The members of the family of God are not members of a friendship club, an academic fellowship, a business association, a political party, a mere human family nor just any religious family, but rather the family of the disciples of Jesus Christ. In other words, they are those who, by the action of the Holy Spirit, have entered into a personal relationship with Christ.[1016] This relationship, which ordinarily begins with the grace of faith and sacramentally initiated by baptism, confirmation and eucharist, entails a way of life of becoming ever-more like Christ, the unique eldest brother of the family of God. It is a way of life that St. Paul describes as follows: 'it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me' (Gal. 2:20).

Out of love for humanity, Christ denied himself of his equality with God the Father, and of his heavenly glory and riches to become one of them (*cf*. Phil. 2:5-7; 2 Cor. 8:9). He further denied himself of the dignity of his human nature by dying on the cross to save them (*cf*. Phil. 2:8). As disciples, therefore, the members of the family of God are called to respond with a similar self-empting love: to deny themselves of their possessions or livelihood, of their limited natural family-ties, of even their very selves and take up their

[1016] *cf*. Hankomoone, 'Church as Family of God', p. 82.

cross (*cf*. Luke 9:23-24, 59-62; Mark 8:34-36), in order that ultimately they may eternally 'share in the divinity of Christ who humbled himself to share in our humanity'.[1017]

This personal relationship with Christ, characterized by the common or equal dignity of becoming more like him, forms the basis of our further elaboration presented in a form of a 'symbiosis' between the models church-*family of God* and discipleship. On the one hand, the individualism that might be generated by an overemphasis on the personal relationship with Christ in the latter model might be overcome by the stress on the communal nature (keen sense of belonging or solidarity, mutual support, common worship) of the familial model. Secondly, the great sense of co-responsibility characteristic of the familial model (due to the value of collective ownership associated with the traditional Ghanaian concept of family) fosters collective involvement in the mission of the church by her members as disciples.

On the other hand, the discipleship model complements the *family of God* model in several ways. First, much as the traditional Ghanaian concept of family could be used to foster co-responsibility and active participation in the church, ironically it has acquired the disvalue of paternalism (*cf*. subsection 5.6.4) – a disvalue which could entrench clericalism and the passivity of the lay faithful in the church.[1018] We, therefore, find the caution of John M. Waliggo very instructive for the process of contextualizing the church as a family of God: 'the theology of the church as family is a double edged sword. It can be profitably used but it may lead also to benign paternalism. We must be careful not to end up again

[1017] These are part of the words of the priest's inaudible prayer which accompanies the act of pouring a little water into the chalice of wine, at the beginning of the 'Liturgy of the Eucharist' [*The Roman Missal*, English translation according to the 3rd typical Latin edition (Nairobi: Paulines, 2011), p. 507]; *cf*. W. Kowalski, 'The Call to Discipleship: A Challenge to Personal Commitment', *AFER*, 42 (2000), pp. 121-30.
[1018] We do not intend to say that clericalism is entrenched only in Africa [*cf*. E. Tengan, *House of God: Church-as-Family from an African Perspective* (Leuven: Acco, 1997), p. 94; *cf*. Orobator, 'A Church in Dialogue', p. 43; *cf*. McGarry et al, 'The Synod's Vision of an African Church', pp.165-6].

with a pyramid structure of the church instead of a circular one of communion'.[1019] The existing clericalism and the passivity of the lay faithful in the Catholic Church in Ghana could be addressed by the priority that the discipleship model gives to equality of all disciples over the differentiation of their vocations and charisms. Secondly, the common dignity calls attention to the fact that in the church men and women as well as young and old are equally members of the family of God. In this respect, we agree with Magesa that the absence of equality of human dignity and justice 'robs the church of its soul.'[1020] Therefore, the local church in Ghana, in embracing the model church-*family of God*, should see it as complemented by the discipleship model so as to avoid carrying over into ecclesial life the disvalues of injustice and discrimination against women and children associated with the Ghanaian concept of family.[1021] Thirdly, the fact that disciples are those who have been called to deny themselves of their limited natural family-ties to embrace the broader family of God, based on the unique salvific blood of Christ, could help the local church avoid the limited inward-looking solidarity or ethnocentrism associated with the Ghanaian concept of family.

Finally since both models have the merit of active participation, they could be seen as mutually magnifying full and active participation by all the members of the church as family-disciples by virtue of their common baptism. This need for the active participation by all the baptized is affirmed by John Paul II: 'by virtue of their rebirth in Christ, all the faithful share a common dignity; all are called to holiness; all cooperate in the building of the one body of Christ, each in accordance with the proper vocation which he or she has

[1019] J.M. Waliggo, 'The Sign of Hope at a Time of Crisis in African' in Africa Faith and Justice Network, *The African Synod: Documents, Reflections, Perspectives* (Maryknoll: Orbis: 1996), p. 208; *cf*. L. Magesa, 'Involving All in Ministry: A Challenge to the Church in the 3rd Millennium', *AFER*, 42 (2000), p. 11.
[1020] Magesa, 'Involving All in Ministry', p. 2.
[1021] Regarding giving a greater role for women in the church, the French Group A Report (First African Synod) states: 'As to the consecrated woman or the lay woman, the church must place greater trust in her, integrate her during the moments of direction, of decision' [www.afrikaworld.net/synod/group-report.htm#006 (accessed on 12 July 2013); *cf*. *Relatio post disceptationem*, nos 9. 10, 30, 32; *cf*. Orobator, 'A Church in Dialogue', p. 41].

received from the Spirit'.[1022] Therefore we agree with Magesa that the church as family-disciples 'must be based on mutual trust, generous sharing and shared prayer.' He further explains: 'sharing, in this sense, means a fundamental openness to all members of the church regarding their faith experience of Jesus (their personal encounter with the risen Lord in their life situations). This type of sharing is proper to every baptized Christian. It is not a privilege of any one group or section of people within the church.'[1023] The aspect of 'personal encounter with the risen Lord' by all Catholics is an area which the Catholic Church in Ghana needs to pay more attention to.

7.2.3 'Family of God' and Institutional Models

Keeping in mind the understanding of the church as fundamentally a communion, which could be expressed as a family of God, and whose members have the common dignity of discipleship, we can now consider the complementarity between our contextual primary model and the institutional model. Though the institutional model is more comprehensive than the juridico-hierarchical aspect of the church (*cf.* subsection 4.4.1), here we limit ourselves to this aspect. The inherent link between the two models could be seen from the fact that all types of family have some forms of institutional arrangements of leadership and distribution of responsibilities.[1024]

Generally the traditional African (Ghanaian) institution of consensus-building (palaver system) allows members of a family to participate in their decision-making processes (*cf.* subsection 5.6.5). It is, therefore, no wonder that many African Christians have 'always kept this vision of consensual procedure as the ideal' basis for contextualizing

[1022] John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation, *Vita consecrata*, 25 March 1996, no. 31.
[1023] Magesa, 'Involving All in Ministry', p. 5; *cf.* Hankomoone, 'Church as Family of God', p. 82.
[1024] Even in the smallest form of family, namely the nuclear family, parents have leadership roles over their children and usually the father is the overall head.

ecclesial authority.[1025] There are, however, a few disvalues associated with the palaver system (*cf*. subsection 5.6.5); and these need to be transformed in the light of the gospel of Christ. Thus, it is the transformed 'palaver system' that would correspond well with the communion ecclesiology in the African, and therefore, Ghanaian context. With this in mind, we now wish to consider some complementary benefits which exist in the 'symbiotic relationship' between the models of family of God and institution.

On how the model church-*family of God* complements the institutional model, we note the following five points. The first point concerns the emphasis on the unique fatherhood of God. Though, as noted in chapter six, some versions of the theology do not explicitly articulate this unique fatherhood (*cf*. subsection 6.2.3), it has to be said that when rightly articulated this could be a basis of addressing the clericalism and the passivity of the laity which are demerits of the institutional model. That is, if there is a sufficient reception of the fact that all the members of the church are, through Christ and in the Holy Spirit, equally sons and daughters of one unique Father, and thus equally brothers and sisters, then there might be less arrogation of power by the clergy, and the laity would feel more obliged by the Lord to be more involved in the life and mission of the church.

Secondly, the strong sense of co-responsibility and the call for full and active participation characteristic of the *family of God* model, that are further highlighted by the values of trust, dialogue and consensus building, collective ownership and division of labour of the traditional Ghanaian concept of family, demand that there should be greater space and involvement of the laity and religious in the decision-making process and better collaboration than the present juridico-hierarchical practices in the church allow.[1026] In this regard, the canonical principle of 'consultative voice' as enshrined in the present *Code of*

[1025] Hinfelaar, 'Evangelization and Inculturation', p. 11.
[1026] L. Magesa, 'Christ's Spirit as Empowerment of the Church-as-Family' in P. Ryan (ed.), *The Model of 'Church-as-Family'*, pp. 31-2.

Canon Law (*cf.* can. 127) seems to stand in the way of a fruitful contextualization of ecclesial collective leadership and decision-making in particular.[1027]

At the beginning of this millennium, John Paul II tried to negotiate around the principle of 'consultative voice', seemingly in view of enhancing the reception of the theology and spirituality of 'church as communion'. He enjoins that

> Communion must be cultivated and extended day by day and at every level in the structures of each church's life. There, relations between bishops, priests and deacons, between pastors and the entire people of God, between clergy and religious, between associations and ecclesial movements must all be clearly characterized by communion. To this end, the structures of participation envisaged by *Canon Law*, such as *the Council of Priests and the Pastoral Council,* must be ever more highly valued. These of course are not governed by the rules of parliamentary democracy, because they are consultative rather than deliberative; yet this does not mean that they are less meaningful and relevant. The theology and spirituality of communion encourage a fruitful dialogue between pastors and faithful: on the one hand uniting them *a priori* in all that is essential, and on the other leading them to ponder agreement in matters open to discussion.
>
> To this end, we need to make our own the ancient pastoral wisdom which, without prejudice to their authority, encouraged pastors to listen more widely to the entire people of God. Significant is Saint Benedict's reminder to the Abbot of a monastery, inviting him to consult even the youngest members of the community: "By the Lord's inspiration, it is often a younger person who knows what is best".[1028] And Saint Paulinus of Nola urges: "Let us listen to what all the faithful say, because in every one of them the Spirit of God breathes".[1029]

More than a decade after the above papal intervention to foster the reception of the communion ecclesiology in the exercise of leadership, particularly in the area of decision-making, we observe no real change in practices in the parishes, deaneries, and dioceses in Ghana. We are, therefore, of the opinion that the problem has to be healed at its root –

[1027] Already (nearly) two decades ago, Aylward Shorter saw the *Code of Canon Law* as the greatest obstacle to the contextualization of the gospel of Christ; and he called for its revision such that it rather fosters this contextualization: 'The 1983 *Code of Canon Law* which reflects the moribund paradigm, needs to be scaled down to provide a framework within which local churches can formulate their own legislative codes. From being the *greatest single obstacle* to inculturation, *Canon Law* should become a source of confidence and creativity in the local churches. Fully developed structures should enable local churches to take full advantage of the law. Greater provision should be made for the holding of *deliberative* councils at regional level' [Shorter, 'Evangelization and Culture', *AFER*, 37 (1995), p. 102].

[1028] *Regula*, III, 3: "*Ideo autem omnes ad consilium vocari diximus, quia saepe iuniori Dominus revelat quod melius est*".

[1029] John Paul II, Apostolic Letter, *Novo millennio ineunte*, 6 January 2001, no. 45; for St. Paulinus of Nola, the pope cites from, "*De omnium fidelium ore pendeamus, quia in omnem fidelem Spiritus Dei spirat*": *Epistola* 23, 36 to Sulpicius Severus: *CSEL* 29, 193; *cf.* John Paul II, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, *Pastores gregis*, 16 October 2003, no. 44.

namely, the canonical principle of 'consultative voice' needs to be replaced in some of the canons. What do we propose in its place? Inspired by the whole consensus building process that characterized the deliberations and conclusions of the ancient 'council' of Jerusalem (*cf*. Acts 15:6-29) and of Vatican II, and in the context of the 'palaver system', we wish to propose the following: firstly, that in some of the canons where only 'consultative voice' is required for decisions at the parish, deanery, diocesan, provincial and national levels (e.g. can. 343, 500 §2, 536 §2), we suggest that it should be replaced by a 'deliberative voice'.[1030] Secondly, however, in such cases, the 'deliberative voice' should be arrived at, not by a mere democratic[1031] count of simple or even absolute majority,[1032] but by consensus building (unanimous voice). And lastly, as the consensus building process of the 'palaver system' involves listening to the voices of the ancestors, so the consensus building in the SCCs, parishes, deaneries, dioceses, provinces, and local church on national level should involve a listening to the 'voice' of the Spirit of God in Scriptures and authentic tradition.[1033] It is expected that the laity thus involved in the decision-making process would be urged on to collaborate more closely with the clergy for the realization of the mission of the church.

[1030] Sometimes, parish projects have either become 'white elephants' or incurred the displeasure of parishioners, because some parish priests went ahead with their constructions against the almost unanimous wish or suggestions of their parishioners. For instance, in one parish in Koforidua Diocese, an expatriate priest refused to locate the parish grotto at a place suggested by the parishioners. Up till today, that grotto has become a mere artistic monument. The parishioners do not pray at the grotto, because the priest erected it along a public lane which passes through the parish compound. In another parish of the same diocese, the construction of a high fence wall around the rectory (undertaken by the parish priest) has incurred the displeasure of parishioners who were raising funds for the expansion of their chapel to cater for the increase in church attendance on Sundays. Such situations could have been avoided if the decisions were based on consensual 'deliberative voice'.

[1031] John Paul II speaks against perceiving the communion model as a democratic system (*Novo millennio ineunte*, no. 45).

[1032] The canonical 'absolute majority' (can. 119, 127) consists of 'any number of more than one half of the votes, and it is to be reckoned on the basis of all those present for the election, whether or not they have all voted or validly voted' [F.G. Morrisey, G. Sheehy et al (eds*)*, *The Canon Law, Letter and Spirit: A Practical Guide to the Code of Canon Law* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1995), no. 240].

[1033] In subsections 7.3.1-7.3.2, there are some practical details as to how to re-structure the local church to facilitate the consensus building process.

Thirdly, the features of strong sense of belonging and fraternity of the model church-*family of God* compensate for their near absence in the institutional model of the church. The communal and interpersonal values of the traditional Ghanaian family could be promoted and fostered in the local church in Ghana if the understanding of the church as family of God is well received in theory and practice. This could address the present situation of institutionalism in the local church whereby many of the laity feel like 'travellers in a passenger bus'.[1034] Some practical suggestions have been made in this regard in the second section of this chapter.

While often in the institutional model there is more emphasis on visible aspects of religion (e.g. obedience to laws and legitimate authority), the *family of God* model (as a contextual expression of communion model) gives due attention to the inner aspects of spirituality and prayer life: for the Ghanaian, religion is inseparable from family and personal life (*cf*. section 5.2). This merit of the familial model is the fourth point about how this model complements the other model. In the local church, genuine spiritual and prayer life could be fostered by elucidating it with the communal and spontaneous worship characteristic of the traditional concept of family.[1035]

The fifth point concerns how the model church-*family of God* compensates for the imbalance of the charism-institution relationship in the institutional model. In the traditional Ghanaian set-up the diversity of the institutions (of leadership and customs) and the talents or 'spiritual' gifts (e.g. healing) are not seen as conflicting. They are rather perceived as complementary and often as originating from the deities and ancestors of the same family. Similarly, it could said that the diverse charisms and institutions in the church complement each other, for they are from the one Spirit of God (*cf*. 1 Cor. 12:4-14, 27-30).

[1034] G.E. Kpiebaya, 'Foreword' in *Church as Family of God: Tamale Archdiocesan Pastoral Congress, 2-5 January 2001* (Tamale: Centre for Pastoral Formation, 2001), p. 4.
[1035] *cf*. SECAM, *Instrumentum laboris*, *The Church as Family of God*, nos 218-9.

Furthermore, a traditional 'family head' or the chief of a village would usually not interfere with the activities of a gifted traditional healer, unless these activities are to the detriment of the family or villagers, and the council of elders has received the complaints of their family members or villagers and thoroughly discussed the issues to arrive at a conclusion with the 'head' or chief. Therefore, a similar rapport could exist between charisms in and institutions of the church such that the extremes of conformism and chaos might be avoided.

To transit to the flipside of the 'symbiotic relationship' between the models of family of God and institution, we wish to observe that it seems the former model could not be accused of the anti-institutional tendency associated with some versions of communion ecclesiology (*cf.* subsection 2.5.5), as the concept of family has inherent institutional aspects. On the other hand, there is the potential tendency of developing the contextual primary model into a kind of democratic system; this, however, could be checked by the institutional model which calls attention to the necessity of the hierarchy in the church.[1036]

Another strength of the model of institution, according to Dulles, is that it provides links between an uncertain present and an esteemed religious past, by insisting on the elements of continuity with Christian origins (*cf.* section 3.2). This calls attention to the fact that a sound theology of the church as family of God can only be articulated in the light of Scripture and authentic tradition. Lastly the merit of clear goals for missionary action of the institutional model could help avoid carrying over into the theology of church as family of God the inward-looking feature or the ethnocentrism associated with the Ghanaian concept of family.

[1036] *cf.* Hankomoone, 'Church as Family of God', p. 82.

7.2.4 'Family of God' and Sacramental Models

As in the previous 'symbiotic relationships' between the pairs of models, the family of God and sacramental models mutually complement each other. We begin, as usual, with how the contextualized primary model complements the sacramental model. Obvious in the model church-*family of God* is the importance of persons and their mutual relationships; and this could compensate for the 'impersonal ring' associated with the model of sacrament (*cf.* section 3.4). Secondly, the due attention the familial model gives to the church's inner aspects of spirituality and prayer life could compensate for the tendency of the sacramental model to overemphasize the external aspect of the church. Thirdly, 'family' is a socio-cultural concept, and in the Ghanaian context it calls to mind social issues like solidarity, care for others, acceptance, trust, dialogue and collective ownership. When, therefore, the concept is employed to articulate the mystery of the church it highlights the commitment of the church to certain social values which the sacramental model does not seem to address.

On the other side of the church as family-sacrament 'symbiosis', some of the merits of the sacramental model compensate for certain weaknesses in the contextualized primary model. Firstly, though like the sacramental model, the model church-*family of God* exhibits both the inner and external aspects of the church, it does not show how they are integrated; this deficiency is taken care of by the integrative character of the church as sacrament.[1037]

Secondly, the sacramental model (like models of communion, discipleship and institution) could help address the ethnocentrism associated with the Ghanaian concept of family and which might be carried over into the church understood as family of God. That is, when the church is perceived as 'family-sacrament of God' it means that it is not a 'closed' family but one that is an instrument of bringing more men, women and children

[1037] *cf.* Hankomoone, 'Church as Family of God', p. 83.

from every clan, tribe, language, race and nation into union with the triune God: 'The church of Christ is the sign and sacrament of the unconditional love of God for every person and of the call of all people to communion together in Christ. The African family at its best, said the synod fathers, provides an experience and an understanding of the church, sign and sacrament of communion with God and the unity of the whole human race.'[1038]

Finally, unity is of essence to the traditional concept of family and consequently the church understood as a family of God could highlight the Christian unity: 'if unity is not the nature, the essence, of family, of church-as-family, then nothing is'.[1039] Similarly, unity is essential to the church understood as sacrament, for disunity among Christians blurs the sacramentality of the church to the world; for how can the world believe that Christians are preaching the same gospel (of the same Jesus Christ) if they are divided?[1040] Therefore, the reception of the harmonized models (church as family-sacrament) could foster the cause of ecumenism and consequently the mission of the church.[1041] The next two subsections

[1038] McGarry et al, 'The Synod's Vision of an African Church', p. 164; LG 1; *cf*. *Ghana Bishops Speak*, vol. 1, p. 96; *cf*. *Acts and Declarations of the First Synod of the Catholic Diocese of Kumasi*, p. 5.
[1039] Magesa, 'Christ's Spirit as Empowerment of Church-as-Family', p. 29.
[1040] According to the last national census in Ghana (2010), all Christians together make up about 71.2% of the national population of 24,658,823. The breakdown of the Christian affiliations is as follows: Catholics = 13.1%; Protestants = 18.4%; Pentecostals/Charismatics = 28.3%; and other Christians = 11.4%, http://www.statsghana.gov.gh/docfiles/2010phc/Census2010_Summary_report_of_final_results.pdf, see Table 16, on p. 54 (accessed on 24 December 2013). Generally apart from the initially rivalries between the Catholic Mission and Protestant Missions in the late 19th century till early 20th century [*cf*. H.W. Mobley, *The Ghanaian Image of the Missionary: An Analysis of the Published Critiques of Christian Missionaries by Ghanaians, 1897-1965* (Leiden: Brill, 1970), pp. 27-8, 132-5; *cf*. P. Obeng, *Asante Catholicism: Religious and Cultural Reproductions Among the Akan of Ghana* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), p.103], the ecumenical relations between the Catholic Church and the Protestant churches on the national, diocesan and parish levels have been encouraging. A national body of cooperation and collaboration among the Protestants is the Christian Council of Ghana. In the very year (1964) Vatican II's *Decree on Ecumenism* (*Unitatis redintegratio*) was promulgated, the Catholic bishops in Ghana established a closer contact with the heads of the member-churches of the Christian Council of Ghana. Then in the late 1960s, the Catholic bishops created a Department of Ecumenical Relations at the National Catholic Secretariat, to coordinate the ecumenical initiatives of the local church. Over the years there have been effective collaboration and cooperation between the Catholic Church and the Protestant churches in the areas of pastoral activities, education, health, and socio-economic and political affairs in the country. This happy development has been duplicated on the diocesan and parish levels (*Pastoral Guidelines for the National Pastoral Congress, Cape Coast, 7-14 April 1997*, p. 23). The challenge now is how the Catholic Church could establish good ecumenical relations with the Pentecostal/Charismatic and other Christian communities.
[1041] *cf*. P.O. Kemdirim, 'Ecumenical Fellowship: A Challenge to Catholic Identity', *AFER*, 40 (1998), pp. 105-9.

consider the harmonization between the model church-*family of God* and the two models of herald and servant, which are missionary in nature.

7.2.5 'Family of God' and Herald Models

Having keenly pursued and fulfilled the salvific mission entrusted to him by his Father, Jesus Christ commissioned the apostles and consequently the church in the same spirit of urgency.[1042] The Johannine account portrays this urgency by indicating that the commissioning took place on the very evening of the Lord's resurrection: Jesus said to the apostles: 'As the Father has sent me so do I send you' (John 20:21); then he breathed on them the same mission-empowering Spirit (*cf*. John 20:22) who had anointed him (*cf*. Luke 4:18-19; Acts 10:38).[1043] Today, the evangelizing mission of the church is as urgent as ever.[1044] John Paul II expresses this urgency: 'What moves me even more strongly to proclaim the urgency of missionary evangelization is the fact that it is the primary service which the church can render in the modern world … which seems to have lost its sense of ultimate realities and of existence itself.'[1045] Specifically for Africa and therefore for Ghana, the pope expresses the urgency as follows: 'Because in Africa there are millions who are not yet evangelized, the church is faced with the necessary and urgent task of

[1042] Even as a child, Jesus' action of staying in the Temple in Jerusalem and his reply to the worried mother and Joseph when they found him there portrays how urgent he saw the mission entrusted to him by his Father (Luke 2:48-50). Furthermore, in the days of his public ministry, the Lord himself expressed the urgency of the mission entrusted to him by his Father in many ways. Here may it suffice to cite an instance from his public ministry: once when Simon and his companions found the Lord in a solitary place and they told him that many were looking for him to heal the sick he told them: 'Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also, because for this purpose I have come forth' (Mark 1:35-39).
[1043] *cf*. B. Hearne, 'Whose Mission? The Neglected Spirit', *AFER*, 33 (1991), pp. 244-8.
[1044] *cf*. Hearne, 'Whose Mission? The Neglected Spirit', p. 248.
[1045] John Paul II, Encyclical Letter, *Redemptoris missio*, 7 December 1990, no. 2; EIG 50. This urgency has led to the call for 'new evangelization' by John Paul II (*Redemptoris missio*, no. 3) and by his two successors: Benedict XVI (Apostolic Letter, *Porta fidei*, 11 October, 2011, no. 4) and Francis (*Evangelii gaudium*, nos 14-8). All these three popes take a cue from Paul VI, who spoke of the need for new ways or methods for evangelization in view of changes of the times (*Evangeii nuntiandi*, no. 40).

proclaiming the good news to all, and leading those who hear it to baptism and the Christian life' (EIA 74).[1046]

For the evangelizing mission to make the desired impact on the peoples of Africa, and therefore on Ghanaians, their context of culture, history, economics, politics and traditional religious disposition has to be taken into consideration.[1047] It is in this light that we agree with the fathers of the first African Synod and John Paul II that the contextualized ecclesiological model church-*family of God* is a 'guiding idea for the evangelization of Africa.'[1048] The local church in Ghana should, therefore, always keep in mind the complementarity between the *family of God* model and the models of herald and servant;[1049] otherwise, certain deficiencies[1050] associated with the traditional concept of family could be carried over into the articulation of the church as a family of God. Furthermore, by keeping in mind the above-mentioned complementarity, the Catholic Church in Ghana could overcome the 'syndrome of pastoral maintenance', namely the situation whereby some priests and other pastoral leaders seem to be largely content with ministering to only church members.

In this subsection we are focusing on the harmonization of the familial model with the herald model, which emphasizes the priority of the proclamation of the word of God: 'the ministry of the word – kerygma, preaching or catechesis – occupies a place of priority in evangelization.'[1051] Before looking at how the herald model helps to offset some

[1046] The First National Pastoral Congress, all the diocesan synods and pastoral congresses we reviewed in chapter six considered the topic of evangelization. However, the extent of implementation of the Acts of the synods and the approved resolutions of the congresses has generally been poor.
[1047] EIG chapters 4, 5 and 15.
[1048] First African Synod, *Propositio*, no. 8; EIA 63.
[1049] The Spanish Group Report (First African Synod), touching on the topic of 'new evangelization', articulates its dual dimension as follows: 'In particular in Africa, it is important to underline the *dual* dimension of evangelization: horizontal and vertical, corporal and spiritual, temporal and eternal. Ignoring one of them would be denying oneself' [www.afrikaworld.net/synod/group-report.htm#011 (accessed on 12 July 2013)].
[1050] Some of these deficiencies are mentioned further on in this very subsections.
[1051] EIG 55; the next subsection considers the servant model.

weaknesses in the familial model, let us consider how the latter model complements the former in their 'symbiotic relationship'. In the first place, the understanding of the church as family of families of God addresses the demerit in the herald model whereby the church is presented as a series of disconnected Christian communities (*cf.* section 3.5). Secondly, the pastoral experience of the family of God in SCCs fosters the herald model's interest in the study of Scripture and its application in daily lives of the members of the church.[1052] Furthermore, since the model church-*family of God* fosters greater sense of co-responsibility and active participation among all her members, it could further facilitate the reception of the call on all to be heralds of the good news by word and deed.[1053] Therefore and in view of the fact that many of the lay faithful in the local church have not yet been sufficiently empowered to undertake the task of proclaiming the word (*cf.* subsection 6.3.5c), some practical suggestions in this regard have been made in the second section of this chapter.

On the flipside of the church as family-herald 'symbiotic relationship', the strengths of the herald model complement the familial model in several ways. In the first place, though the idea of the expansion of the membership of Ghanaian family through birth and sometimes through adoption could be used to illustrate the expansion of the church through the re-birth of baptism, it does not elucidate the important task of expansion through proclamation and Christian witnessing.[1054] On the other hand, the herald model, which has the merit of stressing this mission of the church, could compensate for this deficiency in the familial model.[1055] Thus, the herald model provides the familial model with a clear sense of mission which could help address the low degree of primary evangelization and the attitude

[1052] J. Fuellenbach, *The Church: Community for the Kingdom* (New York: Orbis, 2002), p. 162; *cf.* G.E. Kpiebaya, *Not by Power, But by My Spirit* (Takoradi: St. Francis, no date), pp. 146-8.
[1053] *Evangelii gaudium*, no. 20.
[1054] The fathers of the first African Synod emphasized the importance of Christian witnessing: 'The baptized person who receives from the risen Christ the mandate to bring evangelization to its term and who responds to it becomes in his turn a witness' (*Final Message*, no. 17).
[1055] *cf.* Hankomoone, 'Church as Family of God', p. 83.

of 'maintenance ministry' we observed in chapter six (*cf.* subsection 6.3.5c).[1056] Secondly, deriving from the first point, the herald model (like the other models of Dulles) addresses the issue of ethnocentrism associated with the Ghanaian understanding of family. That is, through the proclamation, more souls – regardless of their clan, tribe, race or nationality – are brought into the family of God. Thirdly, the herald model highlights the fact that the church as a family of God is greater than the visible confines of those who expressively profess faith in Jesus Christ; hence the need for interreligious dialogue.[1057] Fourthly, the herald model animates, with the word of God, the spirituality of the members of family of God. This is an area the local church in Ghana needs to seriously address, for as *Ecclesia in Ghana* rightly attests: 'the method of educating people in the faith has not been effective in Ghana since it was more a process of sacramentalization rather than making them disciples of Christ' (EIG 56); and the 'Ghana Catholic [lay] faithful, literate and illiterate alike, are often said to be ignorant of the bible' (EIG 57).

[1056] *cf. Acts and Declarations of the 2nd Kumasi Diocesan Synod*, pp. 14-5.

[1057] Besides the 71.2% of Christians, the 2010 Census (Ghana) shows that Muslims make up 17.6%, adherents of Traditional African Religion 5.2%, other religions (e.g. Buddhism, Hinduism) 0.8%, and those with no religious affiliation 5.3% of the national population. A similar array of religious and non-religious affiliations prevailed at the time of the First National Pastoral Congress (1997), and so its *Pastoral Guidelines* rightly observes: 'As Christians we live in a religiously pluralistic society. In addition to Christianity there are other religions in Ghana, the most prominent being Islam and African Traditional Religion.… Thankfully in Ghana Muslims and Christians are not total strangers to one another. There is what one may term *dialogue of life*. Christians and Muslims may be found in the same family. At work places, markets, schools, Muslims and Christians live and work alongside one another in peaceful co-existence and tolerance.' The document then goes on to note the occasional strain in the otherwise peaceful co-existence due to the 'emergence of fundamentalism in Ghana both in Islam and Christianity'. And with regard to the traditional religion, the document says among other things that: 'there are in African Traditional Religion positive values which can serve as a preparation for the gospel.' It then states a recommendation of the National Congress: 'The church should intensify its efforts at dialogue with followers of African Traditional Religion through setting up of committees at all levels where they do not exist' [*Pastoral Guidelines*, pp. 24-6; *cf.* EIG chapters 16 and 17]. The call for committees of dialogues at all levels of the local church is very laudable because the traditional religion is not a unified religion, and even in a village there may be several non-related traditional religious groupings. But for a few seminars on 'Christianity and Traditional African Religion' with non-Catholic scholars (who are mostly Christians), the Department of Ecumenical and Interreligious Dialogue at the National Catholic Secretariat has no national or district traditional religion authority to deal with. It simply does not exist. Furthermore, we observe that seventeen years after the National Congress the committees of dialogue with the traditional religion are virtually non-existent in the parishes across the country.

7.2.6 'Family of God' and Servant Models

We now look at the complementary relationship between the model church-*family of God* and the servant model. Though, 'the building of a just social order is part of the competence of the political sphere', as Benedict XVI rightly observes, the church has the social mission of 'forming upright consciences receptive to the demands of justice, so as to produce men and women willing and able to build this just social order by their responsible conduct. The model par excellence underlying the church's thinking and reasoning, which she proposes to all, is Christ.'[1058] Anticipating the Benedict XVI by a decade and a half, the bishops of Africa, based on their pastoral experiences, stressed the fact that the church understood as family of God has a social mission. John Paul II re-echoes this: 'the family of God in Africa must bear witness to Christ also by promoting justice and peace on the continent and throughout the world' (EIA 105; *cf*. EIA 107).

The social mission (servant model) of the church involves the provision of social services, prophetic voice and witnessing.[1059] The Catholic Church in Ghana is evidently doing well in the first two aspects of the servant model, while it needs to work harder to make her 'prophetic witnessing' a more credible instrument of positive social change. Regarding the first two aspects, one could observe that since 1968, all (with the exception of three)[1060] of the communiques, memoranda and pastoral letters of the Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference have addressed issues related to the church's provision of schools, hospitals, clinics; national socio-economic concerns, human and civil rights, justice and peace, general elections, good governance; care for the environment; and the like.

[1058] Benedict XVI, Post Synodal Exhortation, *Africae munus*, 19 November 2011, no. 22; *cf*. Second Special Assembly for Africa of the Synod of Bishops, *Lineamenta*, Rome 2006, nos 37, 40. The 'Second Special Assembly' which we shall be referring to as 'Second African Synod' was held in Rome on 4 to 25 October 2009.
[1059] A.U. Nebechukwu, 'The Church's Prophetic Mission in Africa', *AFER*, 33 (1991), pp. 264-79.
[1060] The three exceptions are the 'Pastoral Letter on the 43rd International Eucharist Congress in Nairobi, Kenya' (1985), the 'Pastoral Letter on the Marian Year' (1988), and the 'Pastoral Letter on Christmas' (1990).

Furthermore, the prominence of these aspects of the servant model could also be seen from the fact that five out of the eighteen chapters of *Ecclesia in Ghana* are on matters like health-care, development, justice and peace, social communications and the environment; and the church's services in these sectors are considered as part of her evangelizing mission.[1061] The Catholic bishops of Ghana have, on several occasions, highlighted this aspect of social services:

> The church has been involved all over the country in social and economic development. The church has greatly contributed towards rural and urban education. The church has been involved in agricultural and fishing development projects.… The vital role played by the church in credit unions has earned her official recognition.… The church, at great cost, both in funds and personnel, has contributed enormously to health care and hospital services.[1062]

They have also often, especially during military regimes, been the 'voice of the voiceless'; and their prophetic criticisms are not only meant to point out dangers of dehumanization but also to inspire initiatives for the promotion or fostering of freedom, justice, reconciliation, peace and integral development in Ghana.[1063] Moreover, there have been occasions when those in the helm of affairs in the state wanted the leadership of the church to silence their prophetic voice, yet the bishops have been resilient:

> The church, as the continuing presence of Christ himself in the contemporary world, continues his task of proclaiming the demands of God's reign in every arena of human existence. Some people today have the notion that religion is purely other-worldly, that it has no place in the social, political or cultural areas of life.… We are bound to say that this is not in consonant with the Catholic social teaching. Indeed, the Second Vatican Council has rightly characterized this dichotomized view of the gospel as being 'among the more serious errors of our age' [GS 43].[1064]

[1061] EIG 163-4.
[1062] *Ghana Bishops' Speak*, vol. 1, p. 63; *cf*. pp. 85, 166-7, 234, among others; *cf*. EIA 107.
[1063] *Ghana Bishops' Speak*, vol. 1, pp. 57, 62-3, 68, 113, 119, among others; *cf*. *Pastoral Guidelines*, p. 12. On their own, the bishops of Ghana have instituted or ensured the institution of certain initiatives for the promotion of justice, peace and good governance in Ghana. Among these initiatives are the Justice and Peace Commissions at the national, diocesan and parish levels, and general election observers. Furthermore, in 2007, the Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference (GCBC), in cooperation and collaboration their German counterparts established at the National Catholic Secretariat a Centre, called Dialogue and Advocacy for Good Governance (DAGG), to further enhance the local church's contribution towards good governance in Ghana and the promotion of justice and peace in general.
[1064] *Ghana Bishops' Speak*, vol. 1, p. 25; *cf*. pp. 55, 160-1, 198, 260.

However, as mentioned already, the faithful (especially the clergy) of the local church in Ghana have much more to do as far as 'prophetic witnessing' is concerned. The fathers of the first African synod did some soul searching on this issue; and John Paul II captures this as follows:

> 'The church must continue to play her prophetic role and be the voice of the voiceless'.[1065] But to achieve this effectively, the church, as a community of faith, must be an energetic witness to justice and peace in her structures and in her relationships among her members. The Message of the Synod courageously state: 'The churches in Africa are also aware that, insofar as their own internal affairs are concerned, justice is not always respected with regard to those men and women who are at their service. If the church is to give witness to justice, she recognizes that whoever dares to speak to others about justice should also strive to be just in their eyes. It is necessary therefore to examine with care the procedures, the possessions and the lifestyle of the church.'[1066]

We are of the opinion that this deficiency in the social mission (servant model) of the local church could be addressed if the model church-*family of God* is well received not only in theory but in practice as well. For instance, if the clergy assimilate well the fact that their lay church workers enjoy common filiation and fraternity with them as one family of God, then one expects that these workers would be paid with wages that accord with justice and solidarity.[1067]

Secondly, the great sense of co-responsibility and active participation of all members of the family of God could call the local church's attention to the need to involve more lay faithful in the social mission of the church, particularly in the area of Christian witnessing: 'the church's witness must be accompanied by a firm commitment to justice and solidarity by each member of God's people. This is especially important for the lay faithful who hold public office' (EIA 105).

[1065] First African Synod, *Propositio*, no. 45.
[1066] *Propositio*, no, 43; EIA 106; *cf*. Italian Group Report of First African Synod; *cf*. *Africae munus*, nos 15-6.
[1067] *cf*. Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* (Rome: LEV, 2004), pp. 89-93, 132-3.

On the other side of the church as family-servant 'symbiotic relationship', the servant model gives the family of God a clear sense of mission of proclamation against violence and injustice in society.[1068] Secondly, in line with this prophetic role, the servant model could help address the discrimination against women and children associated with the Ghanaian concept of family.[1069] With regard to the issue of women, the second African Synod recommended that there should be greater integration of women into church structures and her decision-making process.[1070] Finally, though the *family of God* model fosters communal values like solidarity and care for others, the tendency in the Ghanaian traditional set-up is to limit the scope of beneficiaries due to ethnocentrism. This tendency could be checked if the servant model's aspects of social service to the world (that is, to non-church members), especially to the poor,[1071] and of prophetic proclamation and witnessing are employed to complement the church-*family of God*.

7.2.7 The Gap of Synergy

The mystery of the church, which Vatican II outlines in its 'mosaic' ecclesiology, is greater than the summation of all its constitutive elements (which the models illuminate). We kept in mind this important gap of synergy between the church and its elements, as we attempted to demonstrate how, by taking the model church-*family of God* as a contextual expression of the primary model of communion, and harmonizing it with the models of discipleship, institution, sacrament and herald and servant, one could gain a better understanding of the mystery of the church. The process of harmonization has been done diachronically, and in the process we have shown how a number of demerits associated with each model could be addressed. Moreover, the mystery itself should be understood

[1068] *cf.* Second African Synod, *Lineamenta*, nos 75-80.
[1069] Second African Synod, *Instrumentum Laboris*, no. 20.
[1070] *cf.* Second African Synod, *Propositio*, no. 47.
[1071] Second African Synod, *Propositio*, no. 17; *cf.* Hankomoone, 'Church as Family of God', p. 83.

synchronically such that each model is in mutual complementarity with the other five models.[1072] In this way, a lot more of the deficiencies of ecclesiology, we think, could be taken care of, though the *gap of synergy* can never be entirely bridged by a human thought process. And this is evident in the fact that some of the demerits of some of the models could not be compensated for in the harmonization process. For instance, the process has not been able to solve the riddle associated with the instrumental efficacy of the sacramental model.

Notwithstanding the *gap of synergy*, Dulles' approach, which we have adopted in this study, has enabled us to illuminate certain salient features of the mystery of the church: the church could be comprehended, *first of all, as a communion* of people with God, through Christ and in the Holy Spirit (communion model). Following the inspiration of the first African Synod, we have expressed this communion as a *family of God*. By the work of the Holy Spirit, the church is realized on earth as the *family* of the disciples of Christ (discipleship model), incorporated into his body through faith and baptism. Among the disciples, Christ calls some to the ordained ministry of teaching, sanctifying and shepherding (institutional model) for the nurturing and growth of *family of God*. Not an end in itself, therefore, the visible aspect of the *family of God* is a sign and an instrument of God's grace of salvation (sacramental model) to assemble into *familial* communion with the Holy Trinity all who respond by faith and charity. Furthermore, by the proclamation of the gospel of Christ (herald model) and dialogical service to humanity (servant model), the visible *family of God* disposes human hearts and minds to this faith-charity response.

[1072] This is a whole complex process which is beyond the scope of this work.

7.3 Some Recommendations to Enhance Practical Reception of 'Family of God' as Primary Model in the Ghanaian Context.

As we have seen, while the Catholic Church in Ghana has attained some appreciable degree of the reception in theory of the model church-*family of God* (*cf.* section 6.4), it seems to have a lot more to do to gain a comprehensive ecclesiology in which the familial model is a faithful expression of the communion model and is, at the same time, complemented by the other five models (*cf.* subsections 7.2.1-7.2.6). Having made some proposals as to how the local church could envision such a comprehensive ecclesiology in the above section, we now turn attention to some recommendations on how to enhance the practical reception of the pivotal contextual model.[1073] The recommendations are made with the view to overcoming some of the shortcomings of the practical reception of the model church-*family of God* in Ghana (*cf.* subsection 6.3.5).

We are of the opinion that the enhancement of the practical reception could only take place if the theoretical reception is accompanied by a change of attitudes of Catholics (clergy, religious and laity alike) in Ghana as well as by the renewal of ecclesial organizational structures and leadership styles.[1074] This, we think, is in line with a recent call by Pope Francis: 'I hope that all communities will devote the necessary effort to advancing along the path of a pastoral and missionary conversion which cannot leave things as they presently are.'[1075]

[1073] While we do this, we are not losing sight of the fact that, though primary in the local context, the *family of God* model is only one of several models of the church.

[1074] *cf.* C.B. Okolo, 'The Assembly of the Bishops is Gone; What Next?', *AFER*, 37 (1995), p. 62.

[1075] *Evangelii gaudium*, no. 25. Talking about the ill of 'leaving things as they presently are', Chukwudum B. Okolo had preceded the pope in cautioning the church in Africa. Writing less than a year after the first African Synod, Okolo cautioned against the hindrance of *conservatism* to the implementation of the Synod: 'Conservatism in this context is not all a compliment.… It is not the same thing a being cautious or prudent. It is being too cautious and careful as to do nothing; not at all the same as being traditional but being too traditional, too Roman, too Western, too Irish, etc. For too much of anything is not good. Virtue we know, even from "pagan" Aristotle, is in the middle. Conservatism in the African church or any institution for that matter, constitutes a step backwards. It often paralyzes progress and initiative. At this point in time, we can

Secondly, preceding our practical recommendations with the harmonization of the model church-*family of God* with the other models, especially in stressing the *inner* aspects of the church (communion and discipleship models) and the *missionary* nature of the church (herald and servant models) takes cognizance of a caution of the pope: 'There are ecclesial structures which can hamper efforts at evangelization, yet even good structures are only helpful when there is a life constantly driving, sustaining and assessing them. Without new life and an authentic evangelical spirit, without the church's "fidelity to her own calling", any new structure will soon prove ineffective.'[1076] Yes, the pope continues, '"mere administration" can no longer be enough. Throughout the world, let us be "permanently in a state of mission".'[1077]

This *permanent missionary nature* of the church underlies our recommendations. Once again we find the words of the pope very instructive in this regard: 'Pastoral ministry in a missionary key seeks to abandon the complacent attitude that says: "We have always done it this way". I invite everyone to be bold and creative in this task of rethinking the goals, structures, style and methods of evangelization in their respective communities. I encourage everyone to apply the guidelines found in this document generously and courageously, without inhibitions or fear.'[1078] There are many areas where the Catholic Church in Ghana needs creative renewal or re-structuring. However, in what follows, our recommendations are limited to the following three areas: the sense of belonging among,

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only hope that the prospects for progress and qualitative growth opened up for the church in Africa by the African Synod will not be frustrated by this enemy of progress' [Okolo, 'The Assembly of the Bishops is Gone; What Next?', p. 63]. Instead of conservatism, Shorter, writing in the same year as Okolo, called for a 're-founding' of the church in Africa. He explains: 'This is not a question of abolishing institutions and structures, but a reshaping of them, a change of method, a spiritual renewal and a return to the original source in Jesus Christ, the Word of God. It also implies the wholehearted acceptance of the emerging paradigm of mission, and the adoption of a new church model … the *koinōnia* church.' And this re-founding of the church should be based on Christ's great commandment of universal, fraternal love, such that the church becomes 'a more obvious sign of the kingdom [of God]' (Shorter, 'Evangelization and Culture', p. 101).

[1076] *Evangelii gaudium*, no. 26.

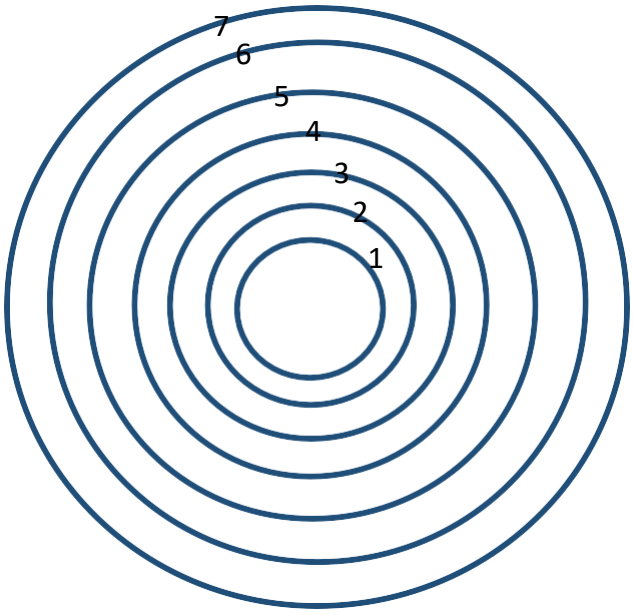
[1077] *Evangelii gaudium*, no. 25; the pope cites the Fifth General Conference of the Latin American and Caribbean Bishops, *Aparecida Document*, 29 June 2007, pp. 201, 551.

[1078] *Evangelii gaudium*, no. 33.

co-responsibility of, and active participation by all the faithful of the local church. We begin with a proposal on a re-structuring of the local church that may foster a better sense of belonging among all the faithful.

7.3.1 Proposed Re-Structuring of the Catholic Church in Ghana: Sense of Belonging

Presently the main structures of organization of the Catholic Church in Ghana are the parish, deanery, diocesan, ecclesiastical province and local church on the national level; the deanery community and the ecclesiastical province, however, seem to be weak links in this chain.[1079] In the light of perceiving the local church as a *family of God*, we wish to suggest that there should be a national Catholic policy to re-structure the local church in such a way that, besides strengthening the roles of the deaneries and ecclesiastical provinces, the whole organizational structure would begin with the 'domestic churches'[1080] (nuclear/household families) and SCCs (see figure 3 below).



(Figure 3 showing the proposed re-structuring of the Catholic Church in Ghana)

1 – 'Domestic churches'; 2 – SCCs; 3 – Parishes; 4 – Deaneries;
5 – Dioceses; 6 – Province; and 7 – Local church on the national level.

[1079] See ahead the subsections 7.3.1d and 7.3.1f.
[1080] LG 11; *cf.* EIA 92.

Thus, we envision a local church organized on seven levels ('domestic churches', SCCs, parishes, deaneries, dioceses, ecclesiastical provinces and the local church on the national level) of spiral-like concentric circles such that the first two organs are not only given statutory roles but are made to function effectively.

Hinfelaar, Tengan and others have preceded us in perceiving the church in Africa as interrelated concentric circles. Apart from specifying that the inner core of his illustrative image of the concentric circles of a tree represents the nuclear family or 'domestic church',[1081] Hinfelaar does not seem to relate the other concentric circles to structures of organization of the Catholic Church. Actually, as we saw, his preoccupation in the article we referred to is to illustrate a new way of exercising authority and decision-making in the church in Africa (*cf.* subsection 7.2.3).

Tengan, in turn, develops an idea similar to that of Hinfelaar though he does not seem to be aware of the work of the latter. Making reference rather to Joseph Komonchak's article on 'The Church Universal as the Communion of Local Churches',[1082] and in the light of the *Dagara* concept of 'family of families' (*cf.* subsection 6.2.3a), Tengan also views the church as made up of concentric circles. He specifies five of them: 'house community' (domestic church), SCC, parish community, diocese and the universal church.[1083] Unlike Tengan, the universal church (which is presumed) does not appear in our scheme because this chapter focuses on the local church in Ghana. Secondly, we observe that Tengan does not mention three structures in his scheme: the deanery community, provincial church and the local church on the national level. We have included these three in our scheme (see figure 3 above). The deanery and province, which are organs of 'decentralization', have

[1081] Hinfelaar, 'Evangelization and Inculturation', p. 15.
[1082] J. Komonchak, 'The Church Universal as the Communion of Local Churches', *Concilium* (June 1981), p. 32; Tengan, *House of God*, p. 85.
[1083] Tengan, *House of God*, pp. 85-8.

been included with the view to fostering a greater sense of belonging. Furthermore, a specific concern of this study is how the various levels of the local church could be closely linked such that the fostering of the sense of belonging in the 'domestic churches' and SCCs could have a ripple effect of better fellowship in the larger ecclesial communities.

In line with the type of decision-making process we wish to propose for the re-structuring of the local church, we suggest that bishops and priests of the local church should first create the forums to thoroughly discuss and build *consensus* with most of the laity and religious as to the nature of the proposed policy, the most effective way of implementing it and time-frames for its realization at each level, taking into consideration the peculiarities of each locality. In what follows, we propose only broad outlines for the re-structuring.

(a) 'Domestic Church'

The most basic building block for the proposed re-structuring of the local church in Ghana is the Christian nuclear family or the 'domestic church':[1084] expectedly the church as *family of God* should pay attention to the Christian nuclear family.[1085] This was affirmed by the fathers of the first African Synod:

> The vitality of the church-as-family, which the synod wishes to highlight, can only be effective insofar as all our Christian families become authentic *domestic churches*. It is there in effect that… fathers, mothers and children, live, in the image of the Holy Family, the richness of the love which is in the heart of God. It is there that [they] learn to share and to increase in the love of God and of men [women and children]. The extended African family is the sacred place where all the riches of our tradition converge. It is therefore the task of … Christian families to bring to the heart of this extended family a witness which transforms from the inside our vision of the world….[1086]

[1084] In Ghana, as generally in Africa, where very often, some nieces, nephews, cousins and/or 'house helps' are part of the 'household' of a nuclear family, the 'domestic church' may include one or more of such persons.
[1085] Orobator, 'A Church in Dialogue', p. 44. In a few places during group discussions (of our field research), some participants stressed on this point [e.g. at Jirapa (Wa Diocese) on 28 July 2013, a few lay participants expressed concerns about how Catholic parents (for financial gains) were easily giving out their daughters for marriage to Muslims, and the consequence it has on the domestic church].
[1086] First African Synod, *Final Message*, no. 27; *cf.* Faniran, 'Journeying Together', p. 39.

In the local church in Ghana, there are references to the importance of the Christian nuclear family or the 'domestic church' in some official documents and preaching.[1087] However, there is yet to be an explicit link of it, through the SCC, to the parish community and beyond. Our proposal is therefore that there should be a statutory requirement that prescribes as well as a process of mobilizing the clergy, religious and laity to ensure that the 'domestic church' becomes the most basic cell for experiencing the church as *family of God*.[1088] Besides the natural values of love and socialization associated with the Christian nuclear family, we agree with the fathers of the first African Synod that, it is the 'original space for the meeting of culture and gospel',[1089] and it becomes the 'authentic domestic church',[1090] when in such a family time is devoted to the daily reading of the word of God and application to the lives of its members.[1091]

However, there are practical challenges to the realization of the 'authentic domestic church' in Ghana today, especially in the urban areas. This is because often the members of a nuclear family or household belong to different Christian denominations.[1092] On the other

[1087] *Pastoral Guidelines*, p. 16; EIG 240; *Acts and Declarations of the 2nd Kumasi Diocesan Synod*, p. 7; *Acts and Declarations of the Third Synod of the Catholic Archdiocese of Kumasi*, pp. 26-7; *Challenges and Hopes for a New Millennium: Outcome of the First Synod* [Accra], p. 17; *First Synod*, *Archdiocese of Cape Coast: Synodal Acts*, p. 33.

[1088] John Paul II calls on dioceses to 'develop a programme for the family apostolate as part of their overall pastoral plan' (EIA 92).

[1089] First African Synod, *Relatio post disceptationem*, no. 20. In an address to the 36th Plenary Assembly of the (Ghana) National Laity Council, held on 27-30 March 2014, in Sunyani, the bishop of the diocese, Matthew Gyamfi said 'that the new evangelization of the church depended largely on the domestic church (the family), the first place where one experiences and is formed in the faith.' The theme of the assembly, which was based on the forthcoming Second National Pastoral Congress (August 2014), was 'The New Evangelization for the Transmission of the Faith – The Role of Marriage and the Family Apostolate' (D. Avevor, 'New Evangelization Depends on Families', *The Catholic Standard*, 6-12 April 2014, pp, 1, 12).

[1090] First African Synod, *Final Message*, no. 27; *cf.* Orobator, 'A Church in Dialogue', p. 45.

[1091] First African Synod, English Group C Report [www.afrikaworld.net/synod/group-report.htm#003 (accessed on 12 July 2013); English Group D Report].

[1092] *cf.* J.S. Ukpong, 'A Critical Review of the *Lineamenta* on the Special African Synod' in G. Alberigo & A.N. Mushete, *Towards the African Synod* (London: SCM, 1992), p. 75; *cf.* B. Hearne, 'Mission, Ecumenism and Fundamentalism', *AFER* 37 (1995), pp. 112-3. There are even cases whereby children who were baptized as Catholics now belong to non-Catholic Charismatic or Pentecostal 'churches', whereas their parents remain Catholics. There might be an even greater challenge to experiencing the family as a domestic church in cases whereby one of the parents, cousins, nieces or nephews is non-Christian.

hand, such a situation could be an opportunity for 'ecumenical charity' to begin at home.[1093] Through the appropriate orientation of Catholics on skills of ecumenical dialogue and further discussions among themselves, some ways of initiating and sustaining regular 'ecumenical' common prayers and reflection on Scriptures at home could be fashioned out and implemented. Such an endeavour if effectively executed would not only strengthen family unity and eliminate faith-related animosity among family members, but may also eventually help to enhance ecumenism on the parish, diocesan and national levels.[1094]

(b) Small Christian Communities (SCCs)

Important as the nuclear family is, in the traditional Ghanaian set-up it is in the extended family that the sense of belonging, solidarity, mutual support, co-responsibility and the like are experienced the more. Moreover, on the daily basis this experience is felt not so much in the great extended family of the clan or tribe but in the 'immediate' extended family of grandparents, grandchildren, parents, children, uncles, nephews, aunties, nieces, and cousins.[1095] Similarly we see the SCC as the 'immediate' extended family that bridges the 'domestic church' with the parish community and beyond.[1096] Secondly, it is the forum for the ecclesial experience of the values of Ghanaian family mentioned above; and so the fathers of the first African Synod saw the SCC 'as the privileged place for the realization of the model of church-as-family'.[1097] John Paul II affirms this:

[1093] *cf*. SECAM, *Instrumentum Laboris*, *The Church as Family of God*, nos 220-1; *cf*. P. Kasenene, 'Natural Communities in Ecumenical Activity', *AFER*, 33 (1991), pp. 150-9.
[1094] *cf*. P. Kasenene, 'Secular Ecumenicity: A Challenge to the Church in Africa', *AFER*, 34 (1992), p. 58.
[1095] *cf*. P.K. Sarpong, 'Can Christianity Dialogue with African Traditional Religion?', http://africaworld. net/afrel/ sarpong.html (accessed on 1 September 2011).
[1096] These SCCs are not isolated units. Rather, as the first African Synod says, it is in them that 'each is moved to construct the family of God, a family entirely open to the world from which absolutely nobody is excluded' (First African Synod, *Final Message*, no.28; *cf*. Faniran 'Journeying Together', pp. 39-40).
[1097] Orobator, 'A Church in Dialogue', p. 44; *cf*. First African Synod, *Instrumentum Laboris*, nos 45, 59; *cf*. *Relatio post disceptationem*, no. 5; *cf*. First African Synod, *Propositio* no. 9, *Final Message*, no. 25 .

> Right from the beginning, the synod fathers recognized that the church as family cannot reach her full potential as church unless she is divided into communities small enough to foster close human relationships. The assembly described the characteristics of such communities as follows: Primarily they should be places engaged in evangelizing themselves, so that subsequently they can bring the good news to others; they should moreover be communities which pray and listen to God's word, encourage the members themselves to take on responsibility, learn to live an ecclesial life and reflect on different human problems in the light of the gospel (EIA 89).

Above all, made up of several nuclear families of Catholics or individual Catholics from such families living in the same neighbourhood regardless of ethnicity,[1098] the SCCs 'are to be committed to living Christ's love for everybody, a love which transcends the limits of the natural solidarity of clans, tribes or other interest groups' (EIA 89).[1099] The task of building SCCs, we therefore concur with the AMECEA bishops, 'is more of creating and developing awareness of what *our renewed vision of the church* means in practical terms and relationships, than of building new structures'.[1100] Hence, our proposed re-structuring is not an end in itself; rather it is a means of achieving a greater sense of belonging.[1101]

Furthermore, we saw in chapter six that only 30.8 % of the parishes surveyed have SCCs; that only 45.0% of these are functioning (*cf*. subsection 6.3.5b); and that this is partly due to the fact that in most (seven out nine) of the dioceses concerned the formation of SCCs is not a policy. Therefore, our proposal is that there should be a statutory national-diocesan policy and a process of mobilizing the clergy, religious and laity that ensures the

[1098] Materials abound on the history, theology and practical ways of establishing SCCs. Besides those mentioned in previous chapters, we indicate a few here: J. Kelly, 'The Evolution of Small Christian Communities', *AFER*, 33 (1991), pp. 108-20; the whole third issue of *AFER* 37 (1995), with the general theme, 'A Call to Revitalize SCCs'; S. Akoto-Mensah, *Basic Christian Communities in Africa* (Lagos: Creative Legacy, 2007); EIG chapter three. The guidelines in EIG 86-90 are adequate to start with. A little modification to these guidelines that we may suggest is about its description of a neighbourhood: it prescribes a radius of 500 metres (EIG 89). In a highly populated urban area with a high concentration of Catholics, this could mean a large membership for a SCC. So we wish to add that the membership should not be more than fifty (50) including children. Thus where this number is exceeded another SCC should be established within the same geographical radius.

[1099] The French Group E Reports (First African Synod) also affirm that the SCC 'will be called to be the concreteness and contextualization of the church the "family of God" as the expression of fraternity which no longer refers to clan or tribal links'; *cf*. Final Message, no. 28.

[1100] J. Mutiso-Mbinda, 'AMECEA Bishops' Consultations', *AFER*, 28 (1986), p. 20; *cf*. B. Hearne, 'Vatican II's Vision and AMECEA's Reality', *AFER*, 28 (1986), p. 31.

[1101] As well as realizing greater co-responsibility and active participation by all the faithful; *cf*. subsection 7.3.2.

formation of SCCs in all parishes in the local church. Secondly, perceived as a *family of* '*domestic churches*', it should be ensured that in all aspects of the life and mission (including preparations for the reception of the sacraments) of every parish the SCCs function as bridges between the most basic cell of the church and the larger parish community. Finally, experiences in many parts of Africa show that it is relatively easier to establish SCCs than to sustain them.[1102] The above mentioned policy should therefore include practical ways of monitoring, sustaining and strengthening the SCCs.[1103]

(c) Parish Community

According to the *Code of Canon Law*, 'a parish is a certain community of Christ's faithful stably established within a particular church, whose pastoral care, under the authority of the diocesan bishop is entrusted to a parish priest as its proper pastor' (can. 515 §1).[1104] Beyond this juridical definition, a parish, we agree with Pope Francis, is supposed to be 'the presence of the church in a given territory, an environment for hearing God's word, for growth in the Christian life, for dialogue, proclamation, charitable outreach, worship and celebration' of the sacraments.[1105]

In reality, however, the majority of the parishes in Ghana do not seem to be communities that are adequately 'nearer to people, to make them environments of living communion and participation, and to make them completely *mission-oriented*.'[1106] This notwithstanding, we again concur with the pope that 'the parish is not an outdated institution; precisely because it possesses great flexibility, it can assume quite different

[1102] Catholic Higher Institute of Eastern Africa, 'AMECEA Priorities and Challenges', *AFER*, 28 (1986), p. 38; Kelly, 'The Evolution of Small Christian Communities', p. 119; B. Ugeux, 'Inculturation through Small Christian Communities', *AFER*, 37 (1995), pp. 135, 140; Kpiebaya, *Not by Power, But by My Spirit*, pp. 149-50.
[1103] A core team of parish SCC coordinators, drawn from the parish pastoral council and headed by the parish clergy could help to ensure the regular servicing and maintenance of the SCCs.
[1104] *Sacrosantum concilum*, no. 42; *Christus Dominus*, no. 30.
[1105] *Evangelii gaudium*, no. 28.
[1106] *Evangelii gaudium*, no. 28; *cf*. subsection 6.3.5.

contours depending on the openness and missionary creativity of the pastor and the community.… This presumes that it really is in *contact with the homes and the lives* of its people, and does not become a useless structure out of touch with people or a self-absorbed cluster made up of a chosen few.'[1107] Therefore, to make the parishes in Ghana more 'mission-oriented' and at the same time bring them closer to the lay faithful, their homes and their lives such that parishioners experience a sense of belonging together as a family,[1108] we propose a change for parochial structural 'contours'. That is, each parish should be envisioned as an *extended family of SCCs*;[1109] and this should be practically implemented according to a new national-diocesan statutory provision to be drawn up by the local church.

(d) Deanery Community

A deanery or a vicariate forane is a 'sub-division' of a diocese (can. 374 §1) which groups several parishes within a specified territory with the aim of fostering 'pastoral care by means of common action' (can. 374 §2).[1110] However, our research in the nine dioceses revealed that in most cases the existing deaneries do not achieve the above objective. Apart from the deanery council of priests (81.6%) and deanery youth council (77.7%) which have good percentages of establishment, the picture of the remaining thirteen deanery councils/committees is not good: their establishment ranges between 7.8% and 47.6%, with half of them being below 20.0%.[1111] Secondly, the effectiveness of the established councils/committees leaves much to be desired. It was noted, for instance, that apart the decisions to have common deanery level celebrations (e.g. Masses at a Marian grotto) and

[1107] *Evangelii gaudium*, no. 28; *cf*. *Christifideles laici*, no. 26.
[1108] *cf*. subsection 7.3.2.
[1109] *cf*. *Evangelii Gaudium*, no. 28; *cf*. F. Lobinger, 'Small Christian Community Clusters', *AFER*, 37 (1995), pp. 188-9.
[1110] *Christus Dominus*, nos 29-30.
[1111] Table 25, Appendix V.

the collection of certain church levies, decisions on liturgical and welfare issues meant to be carried out in the individual parishes were largely ignored by the parish priests concerned. In addition, there were hardly common deanery building or socio-economic projects. Thirdly, more often than not proposals from the deaneries to the diocesan authorities were not approved. Finally, for the above reasons and the fact that the decision-making process does not involve consensus building beginning with the domestic churches/SCCs, the deaneries do not function as good bridges between the parishes and the diocese as a whole.

Therefore, our recommendation to the local church in Ghana is to make the deaneries *not mere institutions* of passing decisions from the top to the 'grass-root' but Catholic *communities* which bridge the parishes and the diocesan church. In this respect, a deanery should function as a *family of parishes* in such a way that its links with their SCCs and their domestic churches are sustained.

(e) Diocesan Church

A diocese is defined by the *Code of Canon Law* as 'a portion of the people of God, which is entrusted to a bishop to be nurtured by him, with the cooperation of the *presbyterium*, in such a way that, remaining *close to its pastor* and gathered by him through the gospel and the eucharist in the Holy Spirit, it constitutes a particular church. In this church, the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church of Christ exists and functions' (can. 369).[1112] In the church in Ghana (as in many parts of Africa and the world), as reflected in the findings of the nine dioceses were surveyed, the diocese as an institution is firmly in place. This could be seen from the data in chapter six that show generally well established institutional structures at the diocesan level: most of the councils and commissions are in place as compared to the deanery or even the parish level (*cf.* subsection 6.3.5a). While a

[1112] The above definition of a diocese is taken verbatim from *Christus Dominus*, no. 11.

diocese in Ghana may be strong institutionally, there is much more to be done for it to be become a *family of God* in which the majority of the faithful (especially the lay faithful) feel 'close to its pastor' and to *one another*. In this respect we propose that a diocese should be envisioned and implemented as a *family of deaneries*, each of which is a *family* of parishes. Secondly beyond the autonomy that the *Canon Law* grants the diocesan bishop (can. 381 §1), we wish to see a diocese functioning as a bridge between the deaneries and the ecclesiastical province.

(f) Provincial Church

According to Vatican II, 'it is often impossible… for bishops to exercise their office suitably and fruitfully unless they establish closer understanding and cooperation with other bishops'.[1113] Such understanding and cooperation may be facilitated by the grouping of neighbouring dioceses into an ecclesiastical province 'with a certain defined territory. The purpose of this grouping is to promote, according to the circumstances of persons and place, a *common pastoral action* of various neighbouring dioceses, and the more closely to foster relations between diocesan bishops' (can. 431 §1). Among the four ecclesiastical provinces in Ghana, the Tamale Province seems to be the one with more cooperation and coordination among the dioceses within it. It is true that all the four provinces have common major seminaries,[1114] and occasional common programmes. However, with the exception of Tamale Province, the other provinces do not seem to have regular 'provincial council' meetings (can. 432 §1). Secondly, the following common programmes and activities are found in the Tamale Province but they seem to be absent in the other three provinces: inter-diocesan priests' association, interreligious dialogue with Islam, Tamale Ecclesiastical

[1113] *Christus Dominus*, no. 37.
[1114] Accra and Cape Coast Provinces which used to be one province until 1992, still share the same major seminaries, with the philosophy campus in Accra and theology campus in Cape Coast.

Province Pastoral Conference (TEPPCON),[1115] and the celebration of the provincial centenary which took place in 2006.[1116]

Even if all the four provinces in Ghana were to meet the requirements of the defined canonical purpose of ecclesiastical provinces, we think that much more would have to be done to realize the church as a *family of God* at this level. We think of a situation whereby there could be the fostering of close relations not only among the diocesan bishops and among a few clerical and lay collaborators but of a greater number of all Christ's faithful in the defined territory. We therefore propose that the church in a province should be envisioned and implemented as a *family of dioceses*, each of which is a *family* of deaneries. Secondly, contrary to the local situation of strong emphasis on the autonomy of each diocese (*cf*. can. 381 §1), we propose that the provinces become true and strong bridges between the dioceses and the episcopal conference.

(g) The Local Church in Ghana

On the national level the juridical body which sees to the promotion of a common pastoral action and fosters close collaboration among the bishops is the bishops' conference:

> The bishops' conference, a permanent institution, is the assembly of the bishops of a country or a certain territory, exercising together certain pastoral offices for Christ's faithful of that territory. By forms and means of apostolate suited to the circumstances of time and place, it is to promote, in accordance with the [Canon] law, that greater good which the church offers to mankind (can. 447).[1117]

[1115] TEPPCON has for instance published a 144-page *Manual for Good Governance and Development at Local Level* (Tamale: TEPPCON, 2006) to facilitate a common programme for good governance and peace building in the Tamale Province.

[1116] L. Abadamloora & J. Gilleece (eds), *One Hundred Years of Grace in the Tamale Province 1906-2006* (Tamale: Ecclesiastical Province, no date), p. 6. It has been observed that in the Accra province there are more common programmes among the three (Ho, Keta-Akatsi and Jasikan Dioceses) out of the total of six dioceses. Those three dioceses belong to the same political region (Volta Region), generally they have the similar cultures and until December 1994, they belonged to the same diocese of Keta-Ho.

[1117] *cf*. *Christus Dominus*, no. 38. There is an ongoing debate as to the competence, especially the teaching authority, of an episcopal conference. You may refer to, for instance, the chapter 2 of L. Orsy, *Receiving the Council: Theological and Canonical Insights and Debates* (Collegeville: Liturgical, 2009), pp. 16-34; and a

Established in 1960, the Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference, especially through the National Catholic Secretariat (its executive arm), has been an instrument for the promotion of common pastoral actions in the areas of liturgy, catechetics, formation of clergy, laity and religious, education, health-care, justice and peace, and good governance in the country.[1118] It has also collaborated with other Catholic bishops of West Africa, Africa as a whole and the universal church.[1119]

Furthermore, through the leadership of the bishops, there have been some level of sharing of resources and personnel (e.g. priests serving as *fidei donum*), as well as common projects (e.g. Catholic University College of Ghana, Quality Insurance Company and Quality Life Assurance Company).[1120] However, there is still more to done in terms of sharing of resources and personnel, and of commitments to common projects. In addition, there seems to be lacking a true national vision of the local church as a *family of God*. The appointment and transfer of bishops, for instance, is rife with ethnic considerations. Besides, to what extent are the well-endowed dioceses willing to adequately assist newly created dioceses especially in deprived areas of the country?[1121] Is there any policy of the bishops' conference in place to foster such sharing? Are the lay faithful and religious

recent article of F.A. Sullivan, 'Developments in Teaching Authority since Vatican II', *Theological Studies*, 73 (2012), pp. 570-89. Engaging this debate may bring some digression to our work.

[1118] *Ghana Bishops Speak*, vol. 2, pp. 120-1.

[1119] The secretariat of the Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar (SECAM) is based in Accra (Ghana). Secondly the then Association of Episcopal Conferences of Anglophone West Africa had its secretariat in Liberia; but during the civil in the 1990s, it was relocated to Kumasi (Ghana). Some of the bishops of Ghana have served and still serve as presidents or other executive and sub-commission members of the above bodies. This is in addition to the fact that the bishops of Ghana regularly attend the plenary meetings of these bodies.

[1120] In separate interviews with the president of Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference, Joseph Osei-Bonsu (on 25 July 2013, at his residence in Mampong) and with Archbishop Emeritus of Kumasi, Peter K. Sarpong (on 24 July 2013, at his residence in Kumasi), they confirmed the above information. Furthermore, regarding the sharing of resources among dioceses they mentioned the financial relief given to less endowed dioceses. That is, the financial dues to be paid for the running of the National Catholic Secretariat have been graduated such that less endowed dioceses pay less amounts.

[1121] This was a question a prelate of the Tamale province raised in an interview he granted me at his residence on 4 June 2013. He lamented the fact the idea of church as *family of God* does not seem to be felt at this level. One of the prelates mentioned above in turn expressed his opinion that since each diocese is autonomous it us up to the local ordinary to strive to raise the resources required for the running of his diocese; that much financial support should not be expected from other dioceses in Ghana.

sufficiently engaged in making inputs to the decisions of the bishops' conference? Unfortunately, we do not think we can answer these questions in the affirmative. We, therefore, propose that the church at the national level should be envisioned and implemented as a *family of provinces*, each of which is a *family* of dioceses such that there is an enhanced we-feeling and mutual support among most Catholics in the nation as a whole.

7.3.2 Co-responsibility and Active Participation of all the Faithful

The above proposed re-structuring of the local church as a *family of God* on seven different levels, so as to foster greater sense of belonging, is the mould or the framework within which we wish to make some further proposals to enhance co-responsibility and active participation of all the faithful. Our proposals call for the renewal of ecclesial leadership structure and style in such a way that there would be a 'grass-root mobilization' of all the faithful for the life and mission of the church.[1122] Without this, all our recommendations would amount to no more than a mere re-arrangement of furniture in a conference room.[1123]

[1122] E.E. Uzukwu, 'The Birth and Development of a Local Church: Difficulties and Signs of Hope' in G. Alberigo & A.N. Mushete (eds), *Towards the African Synod*, p. 19; *cf*. Catholic Higher Institute of Eastern Africa, 'AMECEA Priorities and Challenges', p. 37; *cf*. McGarry, 'Implications of the Synod Discussions for the Church in Africa', pp. 19-20.

[1123] Some of our highly educated lay respondents (for instance during a group discussion at St. Francis Cathedral, Cape Coast on 6 May 2013, and Holy Trinity Parish, Agomenya on 26 June 2013) called for the reform of ecclesial leadership structures and approaches. Similarly, in a research in Zambia by Hinfelaar, the lay respondents indicated such a reform as the top-most priority for effective contextualization of the gospel of Christ in Africa: 'To be honest, very often we have started the task of inculturation from the end. We introduced drums in the church, composed local hymns in the vernacular or spoke about specific African values and virtues without first ironing our mutual relations. Inculturation of the structures so that there will be an African model of being church is the first point mentioned by most of the people who took part in the … sample research' (Hinfelaar, 'Evangelization and Inculturation', p. 10).

(a) Decision-Making

Instead of the present largely top-down approach of decision-making associated with clericalism, we suggest a process which begins from the 'domestic church' and SCC upwards to the local church at the national level. Here, there is a detailed description of the process up to the parish level; and then there is an extrapolation for the levels beyond the parish. Presently, in most parishes in Ghana, the pastoral council and other councils/committees are made up of (besides the clergy) lay representatives from various church associations and some nominees of the clergy. However, in line with the vision of the parish as an *extended family of SCCs* (*cf.* subsection 7.3.1c), we propose that the lay membership of the councils/committees should be drawn from the SCCs.[1124] Whereas in a parish structured on SCCs as a working policy, all members of all the church associations would belong to SCCs, the converse is not true. In addition, with such a working policy, even lay church members who do not belong to any association would belong to various SCCs. Thirdly, whereas it is true that many of the associations cut across ethnic lines (e.g. Sacred Heart Confraternity, Christian Mothers' Association, Knights and Ladies of St. John International, Knights and Ladies of Marshall), some of them are ethnic based (e.g. *Akan* Union, *Ewe* Federation, *Dagaaba* Society); SCCs on the other hand are not ethnic based.[1125] The SCCs therefore facilitate a broader group representation than the associations; and they may help address the challenge of ethnocentrism.[1126] Hence, when employed effectively the

[1124] Where it is necessary to include some nominees of the parish priests, their number should not be more than 10% of the total number of lay membership of the council/committee. Presently, for instance, in the case of Archdiocese of Accra, the priest's nominees to the parish pastoral council could be as many as 20% of the total lay membership. This we think is too high a percentage and it encourages clericalism.
[1125] *cf. Challenges and Hopes*, p. 8; *cf.* J.G. Healey, 'Church-as-Family and SCCs: Themes from the African Synod', *AFER*, 37 (1995), p. 46.
[1126] *cf. Challenges and Hopes*, p. 8

SCCs would aid greater participation of the lay faithful – in decision-making process – in the parish and beyond.[1127]

The above notwithstanding, one cannot ignore the important role that the associations are playing in the life and mission of the local church (EIG 91). To still bring them on board the decision-making process we wish to apply the principle of complementarity which runs through much of this study. In this regard, we suggest that the SCCs be taken as the primary organ, with the associations serving to augment the efforts of the former. That is, in the administrative set-up of the parish, besides the representatives from the SCCs serving on the parish pastoral council, laity council, youth council and various committees, there should be an established forum of the presidents and secretaries of the various associations. The parish priest, his associates and the executive members of the pastoral council could meet with this forum on quarterly basis. Besides discussing issues bordering on the general growth of the parish, the specific needs and concerns of these associations could be discussed at such meetings.

Furthermore, as we indicated in chapter six, more often than not members of various groupings in the parish do not have opportunity to discuss the agenda ahead of the parish pastoral council and other councils/committees' meetings (subsection 6.3.5a). To avoid this, we suggest that the agenda should be made available to SCCs (and when necessary to the associations) ahead of scheduled council/committee meeting. The members of the SCCs (and associations) should have at least two weeks to discuss the issues. A way of ensuring this is to indicate the agenda for the subsequent meeting at the end of a present meeting. In addition, through their representative, the members of a SCC (or an association) could also suggest issues to be incorporated into agenda of subsequent

[1127] In parishes where there are religious communities, the religious Sisters and Brothers could be become associate members of specific SCCs.

meetings. The effective use of regular parish open forums (at least twice a year) and suggestion boxes could also augment inputs into deliberations and decision-making. And to address the situation whereby representatives often failed to relay the progress of discussions to their groups, we suggest that it becomes part of the meeting procedures of SCCs (and associations) to report on deliberations of parish pastoral councils and other councils/committees.

The consensus building principle should underlie the whole process of decision-making (*cf*. subsection 7.2.3) and it should begin from the 'domestic churches' through the SCCs to the parish level in a spiral-like manner. The spiral process may move back and forth until a consensus is achieved.[1128] Such a consensus building process would likely encourage most of the faithful (especially the laity) to own the final decision on an issue and feel co-responsible for its implementation; and hence they would willingly and actively participate in its implementation.

With the parish serving as a bridge between the SCCs and deanery, and the latter as a bridge between parish and the diocese (and so on), the individual lay person has a way of linking up to higher levels of the church organizational structure. And with a consensus building which ensures that decisions to be taken at such higher levels are first discussed thoroughly at the SCCs and parishes levels, most lay persons would feel satisfactorily involved in the decision-making. Consequently, they may feel more co-responsible for and be actively involved in the implementation of decisions so arrived at.

Furthermore, the consensus building process calls for a re-structuring of the current deanery, diocesan, provincial and national decision-making bodies in such way that the

[1128] In this study we are referring to the involvement of the lay faithful in arriving at decisions on non-doctrinal matters only. Secondly, beyond the scope of this study are the detailed statutory prescriptions on which pastoral matters could (or could not) be decided by a *consensual* 'deliberate voice' (*cf*. subsection 7.2.3) of the parish, deanery, diocesan, provincial and national *pastoral councils*.

participation of the laity and religious therein are increased. At the moment these higher decision-making bodies are made up of only bishops and priests – in line with the *Code of Canon Law* (can. 447, 495, 502). We are of the opinion that in the long term these canonical provisions have to be revised (*cf.* subsection 7.2.3). Meanwhile, we do not think the Holy See would disapprove any proposal of the Catholic Church in Ghana (*cf.* can. 455) to re-structure its decision-making bodies such that they facilitate a greater participation of the laity and religious in the mission of 'the salvation of souls, which in the church must always be the supreme law' (can. 1752). In this respect, we propose that on the deanery level, for instance, instead of the exclusively clerical council of priests taking certain decisions for all the faithful in their jurisdiction, the *deanery pastoral* council (which includes lay representatives from the various parishes and religious representatives from the various religious convents or houses) should rather be the forum for arriving at such decisions. That is, we suggest that the deanery *pastoral* council should be empowered with a 'deliberative voice' for certain issues. And the decisions should be taken not based on the opinions of priests, laity and religious present at the meetings, but on the consensus building discussions that emanate from the parishes and convents they represent. Similarly, on the diocesan, provincial and national levels, there should be *pastoral* councils structured to function in this way.[1129] In the light of the above, we further suggest the 'consultative voice' that *Canon Law* assigns to diocesan synods (can. 466) should be replaced with a *consensual* 'deliberative voice' (*cf.* subsection 7.2.3); and that these synods should be held at regular intervals of every five years.[1130] Finally, then, national pastoral congresses, also based on consensual 'deliberative voice', could be held every ten years.

[1129] After all, for all these levels, we read that the purpose for their establishments is for the realization of a 'common *pastoral* action'. The question, then, is: how can we pretend to be undertaking a '*pastoral* action' without effective '*pastoral* councils' which include the lay and religious?
[1130] In Ghana, only Kumasi Archdiocese has held synods at a regular interval of 10 years.

(b) Ministries: the Role of the Lay Faithful

Often when addressing the issue of lay ministry in the church the focus is placed on catechists. The *Lineamenta* of the first African Synod, for instance, gave the impression that catechists are the only lay persons among the ministers (pastoral workers):[1131] 'in Africa, pastoral workers fall into the following categories: bishops, priests, permanent deacons, brothers, sisters and catechists'.[1132] Instead of such a restrictive understanding of lay participation in the ministries of the church, we envision a situation whereby a far greater portion of the laity who form about 99.9%[1133] of the church's population are engaged. In this respect, we find John Paul II's broader view of lay ministry more useful:

> Besides catechists, mention must also be made of other ways of serving the church and her mission; namely, other church personnel: leaders of prayer, song and liturgy; leaders of basic ecclesial communities and bible study groups; those in charge of charitable works; administrators of church resources; leaders in the various forms of the apostolate; religion teachers in schools. All the members of the laity ought to devote a part of their time to the church, living their faith authentically.[1134]

The vision to engage such a greater portion of the laity in the life and mission of the church could be realized by organizing the local church from the 'grass-root' upwards in the manner we have been describing. That is, because of the process of subsidiarity or 'decentralization' inherent in the concept of SCCs, many more lay men and women would

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[1131] K. Kapia, 'A Theology of Fostering Ecclesial Communities', *AFER*, 33 (1991), pp. 121-2.
[1132] First African Synod, *Lineamenta*, no. 37.
[1133] The 2011 Statistics of the Catholic Church in Ghana provide us with the following figures: bishops = 24 (including 5 retired bishops); diocesan and religious priests = 1,450; Sisters = 843; Brothers = 221; the number of deacons have not been indicated [*Ghana Catholic Diary and Directory 2014* (Accra: Catholic Book Centre, 2014), pp. 231-2]. For the total population of Catholics we used the 2010 national census figure of 3.230,966. The percentage of 99.9% is comparable to the ratio of clergy/religious to lay Catholics in the world: The worldwide statistics of the Catholic Church as at 31 December 2011 are summed up as follows: total number of Catholics = 1,213,591,000; bishops = 5,132; diocesan and religious priests = 413,418; permanent deacons = 40,914; Sisters = 713, 206; and Brothers = 55,085. The number of the clergy in temporal diaconate have not been provided for [this is a summary of the statistics presented on the 2013 World Mission Day, accessed on http://www.news.va/en/news/vatican-world-mission-day-catholic-church-statis-3 (20 December 2013)]. Not taking into consideration persons in the temporal diaconate, the percentage of lay Catholics comes to 99.89883 = 99.9%.
[1134] *Redemptoris missio*, no. 74.

take up responsibilities at that level; and then some of those who exhibit certain talents or develop interests in certain ministries in the SCCs would be encouraged to serve the larger parish community and probably beyond it. For instance, some of those who develop interest in music in the SCCs may eventually join the parish choir; those who show keen interest in reading the Scriptures may become lectors in the parish; those who lead in the bible discussions may develop interest in teaching – they could then be trained as catechists or teachers of post-confirmation classes;[1135] those who play the role of welfare coordinators for the care of the sick and needy may be engaged at the parish level; those who exhibit good skills for organizing women could be enrobed in the parish women's ministry; young members who show interest in organizing their peers could be engaged in the parish youth ministry; and those who organize the children may be called upon to help with the Sunday children's service.

In addition, those who have professional competences in various fields (e.g. civil engineering, law, medicine, project management, etc.) through their participation in the SCCs may feel called and responsible to represent their small communities and so serve the parish church and beyond on the relevant councils and committees. Besides, others may exhibit special leadership skills and may emerge and be recognized as leaders of their SCCs – some of whom may be elected as representatives to the parish pastoral council.[1136]

(c) Primary Evangelization

Among the ministries is the special task of primary evangelization. We are considering it separately so as to emphasize it, since little attention has been given to it in

[1135] Well trained full-time catechists could help in the ongoing formation of SCC 'catechists' at the parish level; *cf.* M. Wuestenberg, 'A Comparison Between the SCCs of Burkina Faso with those of South Africa', *AFER* 37 (1995), p. 184.
[1136] J.D. Whitehead & E.E. Whitehead, *The Emerging Laity: Returning Leadership to the Community of Faith* (New York: Doubleday, 1986), p. 70.

the local church.[1137] This key aspect of the mission of the church could be inculcated in a greater number of the lay faithful through the activities of praying with and discussing Scriptures in the 'domestic churches' and SCCs. First, after the appropriate provincial, diocesan and deanery leadership seminars, there should be a general orientation through teachings at the parish level to encourage individual parishioners to show keen interest in identifying non-Christians among family and friends, and bringing the good news of Christ to them.[1138] Secondly, the orientation should also call attention to the need to bring lapsed Christians back to Christ. Thirdly SCCs should be designed to regularly organize their members, at least, in pairs to visit some homes in their neighbourhood and bring them the message of Christ. Fourthly, the general orientations should stress the importance of Christian witnessing by edifying lifestyle, communal living and works of mercy.[1139] Fifthly there should be ongoing formation programmes for the leadership of the SCCs and the parish evangelization team members, who may be entrusted with the additional responsibility for evangelization beyond the immediate environs of the parish.[1140]

To further emphasize the importance of primary evangelization and to monitor its progress there should be monthly reports on the conversion of souls from the SCCs to the parish pastoral council; the conversion and pastoring of souls, rather than infrastructural development, should be the first priority of the council.[1141] The parish evangelization team may be required to give quarterly reports to the council. And there should be detailed guidelines as to how to develop the faith of new converts and how to incorporate them into the parish life in such a way that they would feel belonging.

[1137] It is noteworthy that despite the call for 'new evangelization' and the treatment of this topics in most of the diocesan synods and pastoral congresses that we reviewed in chapter five, its primary aspect has been the least implemented up to date.
[1138] *Evangelii gaudium,* nos 127-9*; cf. Evangelii nuntiandi*, no. 46.
[1139] *Evangelii nuntiandi*, no. 41; *cf.* Shorter, 'Evangelization and Culture', p. 103.
[1140] EIG 90.
[1141] *Redemptoris missio*, no. 83; *cf. Evangelii gaudium*, no. 25.

7.3.3 Formation of the Faithful

The task of *primary* evangelization cannot be achieved if Catholics are themselves not adequately evangelized; for as the saying goes 'no one can give what he/she does not have.' John Paul II affirms this: 'People who have never had the chance to learn cannot really know the truths of faith nor can they perform actions which they have never been taught (EIA 75).' That is why the call for 'new evangelization' does not focus on only reaching out to win souls from outside the church, but also on the re-evangelization of Catholics.[1142] One way of achieving such *intra ecclesial* evangelization is through ongoing formation programmes. And such programmes should be designed and implemented not only for the clergy, religious and catechists but for the whole local church.[1143] Hence, we agree with the pope that '"the whole community needs to be trained, motivated and empowered for evangelization, each according to his or her specific role within the church."[1144] This includes bishops, priests, members of institutes of consecrated life and societies of apostolic life, members of secular institutes and *all the lay* faithful' (EIA 75).[1145]

Firstly, at the level of the Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference, there should be, an ongoing formation programme (at least, annually) to constantly re-enkindle in the bishops a keen interest in fulfilling their missionary mandate, and for the acquisition of up-to-date skills for animating evangelization in their provinces and dioceses. Secondly for the priests and religious, while intensifying their present ongoing formations at regular intervals (at

[1142] *Evangelii gaudium*, nos 3, 14; *cf. Porta fidei* no. 4.
[1143] The importance of ongoing formation for the clergy, religious, catechists and other lay faithful has been articulated in the documents of the National Pastoral Congress (e.g. EIG 217-9, 222-3, 260-8, 277-84), diocesan synods and pastoral congresses (e.g. *Challenges and Hopes*, p. 10; *Synod of Koforidua*, p. 36; *Second Synod of Kumasi*, pp. 10-2). However, among the laity, apart from catechists and some lay leaders, systematic programmes for the ongoing formation of the general body of the laity, especially with the view to making them agents of evangelization, are virtually non-existent.
[1144] First African Synod, *Relatio ante disceptationem*, no. 8.
[1145] *Christifideles laici*, nos 45-6; *Redemptoris missio*, nos 71-4; EIA 90.

least twice annually), there should be a re-orientation of these programmes such that due emphasis is given to evangelization as a major priority of the church. In addition, new programmes geared towards making the priests and religious better animators and agents of primary evangelization should be introduced. Similarly, while the present formation programmes for catechists, religious education teachers in schools, lectors, extraordinary ministers of the eucharist, choir masters, parish pastoral councillors, parish committee leaders, women's leaders, youth leaders and other lay leaders should be intensified, there should be new programmes to constantly enhance their knowledge and skills as primary evangelizers. Fourthly, besides the training programmes mentioned above, there will be the need for well-designed comprehensive programmes for the initial and ongoing training and formation of lay men and women, the youth, SCC leaders, catechists, seminarians, religious and the clergy for the realization of the above proposals aimed at enhancing the sense of belonging, as well as the sense of co-responsibility and active participation in the life and mission of the church. Finally, then, more formation centres for the training of all these categories of Catholics may have to be established (*cf*. EIA 90).[1146]

7.4 Conclusion

This final chapter of our study has considered some theoretical and practical prospects of the communion-based 'mosaic' ecclesiology of Vatican II for the Catholic Church in Ghana. The presentation consisted of a section on the *theoretical* prospects and another section on the *practical* aspects. Aware that there are a lot of materials on the theoretical prospects for the Catholic Church in Africa and Ghana in particular, and having reviewed some of these materials (chapter six), we have contributed in a few specific areas. Key to the understanding of the 'mosaic' ecclesiology of Vatican II in the African and,

[1146] *cf*. Wuestenberg, 'A Comparison Between the SCCs', p. 185.

therefore, Ghanaian context is the theology of the church as *family of God*. There seems to be an appreciable reception in *theory* of this familial model by the Catholic Church in Ghana. However, it seems the local church is lagging behind in receiving in *theory* a more comprehensive ecclesiology in which the familial model is a faithful contextual expression of the primary model of communion. In this respect, we have made contributions in the following specific areas to enhance the reception in *theory* of a comprehensive ecclesiology by the local church: (a) the approach employed to demonstrate how the model church-*family of God* elucidates the conciliar primary model of communion in its four main dimensions of vertical-invisible, vertical-visible, horizontal-invisible and horizontal-visible in the Ghanaian context; (b) the 'symbiotic' harmonization of the *family of God* model with Dulles' five models of discipleship, institution, sacrament, herald and servant in such a manner that some disvalues associated with the traditional Ghanaian concept of family as well as some weaknesses of the models could be addressed; and (c) an indication that the relation between all the ecclesial constitutive elements (described with the aid of the models) and the mystery of the church is a kind of synergy.

In the vertical-invisible dimension of the church as *family*-communion harmonization, we highlighted the trinitarian character of the church, making use of how the metaphors of people of God, body of Christ and temple of the Spirit complement the familial model. Our approach, therefore, indicated how to avoid the tendency which overlooks the ecclesial trinitarian character and the unique fatherhood of God the Father as found in certain versions of the theology of the church as *family of God*. Secondly, the act of communal worship of a family 'deity' in the traditional Ghanaian set-up was used to illustrate the vertical-visible dimension of communion. Thirdly, the belief in the existence of ancestors and their veneration was used to elucidate the horizontal-invisible dimension of communion, while noting the limitations of the analogy. Fourthly, the communal values of

the Ghanaian concept of family were used to indicate some prospects of the horizontal-visible of the church as *family*-communion. A vision of the church that the above exercise projects for the Catholic Church in Ghana discourages ethnocentrism, and calls for cultivating a stronger sense of belonging among all the faithful, deepening their co-responsibility and enhancing their active participation in ecclesial life and mission.

Subsequently, in the 'symbiotic' harmonization of the model church-*family of God* with each of the other five models of Dulles, we demonstrated that the merits of the contextualized primary model could compensate for some weaknesses in the other models as follows: first, its communal nature could address the individualism in the discipleship model, the impersonal character of the institutional and sacramental models. Secondly, when the church is perceived as a family of interrelated concentric circles the tendency in the herald model to wrongly conceive the church as a series of disconnected Christian communities could be taken care of. Thirdly, its great sense of co-responsibility and active participation could address the clericalism and passivity of the laity that are associated with the institutional model. Related to the above point is our proposal that in the decision-making process in the local church, the consensus building characteristic of the Ghanaian traditional 'palaver system' suggests the replacement of the 'consultative voice' in some canons with the consensual 'deliberative voice'. Fourthly, the familial model could compensate for the inadequate spiritual and prayer life in the institutional and sacramental models. Fifthly, as against the apparent institutionalism in the local church, the familial model advocates for a balance between institution and charisms. The sixth point is that the familial model compensates for the sacramental model's lack of interest in social issues. As the seventh point, the practical experience of the family of God in SCCs fosters the herald model's emphasis on the study of the bible and its application to the lives of the faithful.

Finally, the familial model calls for greater participation in the heraldic and social missions of the church.

On the other side of the 'symbiotic' relationships between *family of God* and the other models, the weaknesses (including the disvalues of the Ghanaian concept of family) of the former model are compensated for in several ways. In the first place (like the communion model) all the other five models address (though from different angles) the disvalue of ethnocentrism that could creep into the church understood as family. Secondly, the equal dignity of the discipleship model and the prophetic role of the servant model could help address injustice and discrimination against women and children both within and outside the church. Thirdly, the discipleship model emphasizes the need for the spirituality of the members of the *family of God* to be rooted in their personal encounter with the risen Lord Jesus Christ, by the grace of the Holy Spirit; this is an area where the local church has more work to do. Fourthly, where paternalism wants to raise its ugly head in the familial model, the discipleship model could address it; and in this regard the local church needs to enhance its reception of the discipleship model so as to overcome the prevalent clericalism and the passivity of the laity. To the other extreme, should the familial model tend to become a democratic system, the institutional model could hold it in check. Sixthly, the institutional model provides the familial model a stable link with the *living* memorial of the church – with its Scriptures and authentic tradition. Next, the sacramental model complements the familial model with its integrative nature and its incentive for the necessity of Christian unity. Then, both the herald and servant models provide the familial model with a clear sense of mission; and here the herald model calls on the local church to redouble her efforts in the proclamation of the good news, especially with regard to primary evangelization. Furthermore, another important task of the local church is brought to light by the herald model as it animates, with the word of God, the spiritual and prayer life of the

members of the *family of God*. Finally, the servant model reveals a void in the social mission of the local church: the need for prophetic witnessing, especially within the church's own set-up.

We concluded the section on the *theoretical* prospects for the local church (Ghana) by indicating, firstly, that though we have harmonized the pairs of models diachronically, the mystery of the church is better understood by perceiving the harmonization synchronically; and that this is a process beyond the scope of this study. Secondly, it should be borne in mind that there is a *gap of synergy* between the mystery of the church and its constitutive features which are illuminated by the models. The salient constitutive features which are illuminated by the models employed were then summed up (*cf*. subsection 7.2.7).

In the second main section of this chapter we considered some prospects for the reception in *practice* of the conciliar communion-based ecclesiology by the Catholic Church in Ghana. In this section we limited our scope to three main areas of the practical reception of the model church-*family of God*: the sense of belonging, co-responsibility and active participation by all the faithful in the local church. With the assumption that the *theoretical* reception of the *family*-based ecclesiology would be accompanied, to use the words of Pope Francis, by 'a pastoral and missionary conversion which cannot leave things as they presently are',[1147] we hold that the reception in *practice* would be greatly enhanced if there is a renewal of the local church's organizational structures and leadership styles. In this study we have dwelt more on the re-structuring of the organizational structures, and given only a few indications on the need to change the leadership style. Secondly, our proposals have largely been determined by our attempts to respond to the lapses in practical reception as described in chapter six (especially, in subsection 6.3.5).

[1147] *Evangelium gaudium*, no. 25.

From a present organizational structure made up of five levels (parish, deanery, diocese, ecclesiastical province, church on the national level) in which the second and fourth levels are weak links, we have proposed, firstly, that the weak links should be strengthened; and secondly that two more basic levels should be introduced: the 'domestic church' and SCC. Thus, in the proposed new way of being church, the Catholic Church in Ghana would be organized on seven closely linked levels (domestic church, SCC, parish community, deanery community, diocesan church, ecclesiastical province and church on the national level) of spiral-like concentric circles such that the first two organs are not only given statutory roles but are made to function effectively in practice as well. With a strong sense of belonging created at the basic levels of domestic churches and SCCs many more Catholics would feel belonging to the larger community of the parish and beyond. Furthermore, based on this new structure of a *family of interrelated concentric circles*, we have also proposed the adoption of the above-mentioned consensus building process for decision-making in the church. Creating such a strong sense of belonging and involving more Catholics in the church's decision-making process might greatly enhance the co-responsibility and active participation of all the faithful in the ecclesial life and mission, especially in her task of primary evangelization.

Finally, there is the need for 'mission-oriented' training and ongoing formation of the clergy, religious, catechists, and other lay faithful for the realization of the above vision of the local church as a *family of God*. We have only given a few indications for training and formation in this study. It is an area which needs further detailed study. There are also other areas which need further studies; some of these areas have been indicated in the general conclusion of this study.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

This thesis has been a study of the reception of the 'mosaic' ecclesiology of Vatican II. After stating in the introductory chapter that, for Vatican II, the church is first and foremost a mystery, it was demonstrated that this mystery is primarily a communion between the triune God and the faithful, as well as a communion among the human members. About three decades after the council, the first African Synod endorsed the effort to contextualize this ecclesiology of communion as *family of God*. However, nearly fifty years since the closing of Vatican II and twenty years since the first African Synod, the reception in *praxis* of the communion ecclesiology by the Catholic Church in Ghana seems to be lagging behind its *theoretical* reception. Furthermore, there seems to be no attempt in the theological works in the local church (Ghana) to complement the model church-*family of God* with other ecclesiological models. This research has, therefore, sought to critically investigate the process of reception of the conciliar communion-based ecclesiology by the Catholic Church in Ghana, with the view of making some proposals to enhance it.

What then is reception? And, what has been the actual process of reception of the conciliar ecclesiology in the Catholic Church (across the world) since the beginning of the council? There has been an attempt to answer these questions in the chapter two of this study. Both the concept and the actual process of reception have developed since the beginning of the council. Then, seeking a theological tool that could enable us to elucidate and systematize the 'mosaic' ecclesiology of Vatican II, we found the multi-models' method of Dulles useful. Dulles articulates six models of the church: institution, mystical communion, sacrament, herald, servant and community of disciples (chapter three).

In this study, Dulles' multi-models' method has been employed in a fashion of 'renewal in continuity'. Firstly, though he intends to present '*irreducible distinct* models',

his sixth model appears to be a hybrid between the model of 'discipleship' and an aspect of the 'communion' model. So it has been argued that the *distinct* sixth model is 'discipleship' (dissociating the element of 'community' from it). Secondly, more evidently than Dulles, it is the position of this thesis that for the 'mosaic' ecclesiology of Vatican II, the communion model (of which 'community' is only an aspect) is the primary model. Thirdly, Dulles says that the various models should 'interpenetrate and mutually qualify one another'; this is what we refer to as a 'symbiosis' among the models. We observe, however, that Dulles seems to focus mainly on how the primary model compensates for the deficiencies in the other models. So, in furtherance to his work, we have attempted to articulate both how the primary model qualifies the other models, and how the latter, in turn, qualify the former.

Fourthly, like Dulles we have harmonized two models at a time in a sequential manner. However, unlike Dulles whose sequence follows a chronological pattern, ours is based on the characteristic natures of the models. For this reason, we have classified the six models as follows: (a) the communion and discipleship models focus mainly on the *inner* nature of the church; that is, both of them deal mainly with what the church is in itself; (b) the models of institution and sacraments deal with the *instrumental* nature of the church; that is, the 'institution' is a means (instrument) for the nurturing, unity and growth of the church, while the 'sacrament' is a sign and instrument of salvation; and (c) the models of herald and servant obviously concern the *missionary* nature of the church. We do not rule out any overlapping in such a categorization. However, we have been enabled to articulate the *inner*, *instrumental* and *missionary* natures of the church in a *sequential* manner. Furthermore, we have introduced the idea of *synergy* into the whole thought process to account for the gap between the 'summation' of the ecclesial *salient features* or elements (described with the aid of models) and the mystery of the church.

With the above background, we were set to consider the first objective of this study: to articulate a communion-based multi-models ecclesiology in the light of Vatican II. This was the task we have attempted to accomplish in chapter four by mutually harmonizing the communion model with each of the other five models. The salient features of the mystery of the church which the models portray could be summarized as follows: the church could be comprehended, *first of all, as a communion* of humans with God, through Christ and in the Holy Spirit (communion model). This communion is realized on earth, by the work of the same Spirit, as the community (visible communion) of the disciples of Christ (discipleship model), incorporated into his body through faith and baptism. Among the disciples, Christ calls some to the ordained ministry of teaching, sanctifying and shepherding (institutional model) for the nurturing and growth of the community – and ultimately for the expansion of the invisible communion. Not an end in itself, therefore, the whole visible community is a sign and an instrument of God's grace of salvation (sacramental model) to assemble into communion with the Holy Trinity all who respond by faith and charity. Furthermore, through the proclamation of the gospel of Christ by word and deeds (herald model), as well as, by service to humanity (servant model), the visible community disposes human hearts and minds to this faith-charity response. Our approach has enabled us to address both *Communionis notio*'s 'some aspects' and Doyle's 'other aspects' of the church understood as communion (*cf*. section 4.8).

The second objective of this study is to ascertain the degree of reception, in *theory* and *practice*, of the model church-*family of God* by the Catholic Church in Ghana. Two preliminary considerations prepared the grounds for the realization of the above objective. In the first place, chapter five presented the *Akan* (Ghanaian) perspective of the traditional African concept of family which serves as the matrix for the contextualization of the communion model. Secondly, the first section of chapter six considered the reception on

the continental level. Taking the first African Synod as a *watershed* in the process of reception, the situations prior to, during and after the synod were considered. In the first phase, there were a few theological initiatives to contextualize the 'communion' model as 'church as clan/tribe' (Mulago) and later as 'church with a negro face' (Malula). Meanwhile, on the practical level there were attempts, especially in East Africa and Burkina Faso, to experience the 'church as communion' through the promotion and fostering of SCCs. In Burkina Faso, there emerged from this pastoral communal experience the theology of the church as *family of God*. It was, in a sense, the beginning of a 'first moment' (Gaillardetz) of reception by the bishops of Burkina Faso.

With the endorsement by the bishops of Africa and John Paul II, the above 'first moment' of reception came to fruition at the first African Synod. The bishops of Africa and the pope recommended the model church-*family of God* to the whole church in Africa and called for its theological elaboration (second phase). This magisterial call ushered in a 'second moment' (Gaillardetz) of reception of the familial model (third phase). We have examined some theological works (Tengan, Appiah-Kubi, Tanye, Awinongya, Benson and Hankomoone) of this 'second moment' of reception.

For the reception of the model church-*family of God* in the local church (Ghana) there are two phases: the situations before and after the first African Synod. It seems there was no explicit theology of the church as *family of God* in this phase and only few parishes had established SCCs to foster the sense of belonging. Since the synod, however, there have been good attempts at reception *in theory* through some pastoral letters of the bishops' conference, synods and pastoral congresses, though the degree of reception varies from diocese to diocese and parish to parish. Secondly, all the clergy- and religious-respondents

and the majority of the lay respondents could articulate the understanding of the church as *family of God*.

The above notwithstanding, the reception *in practice* is lagging behind in several respects, three areas of which have been the concern of this study: the extent of active participation by all Christ's faithful, the sense of belonging among the lay faithful and the sense of co-responsibility of the lay faithful. In the first case, whereas the majority of the clergy felt that they were sufficiently engaging the lay faithful in decision-making process of the church, about half of the lay respondents felt otherwise; besides, there has been no real reform of structures and procedures of ecclesial governance to enhance effective lay participation. As regards the sense of belonging, we noticed that, while the majority of the lay respondents *believed* that they belong to the church as one family, less than half of them were satisfied with the *social* aspect of interpersonal relationships and mutual support; and less than a third of the respondents indicated that they had SCCs in their parishes to promote and foster this social aspect of belonging. Thirdly, whereas the majority of the lay respondents were convinced that they were jointly (with the clergy) responsible for the life and mission of the church, less than half of them felt adequately empowered to be thus co-responsible; and a far less percentage indicated that they felt empowered for the specific mission of primary evangelization.

Furthermore, none of the theological works by Ghanaians (Tengan, Appiah-Kubi, Tanye, and Awinongya) demonstrate how the model church-*family of God* is complemented by other models of the church. There are, however, a few African theologians who articulate the complementarity between the model church-*family of God* and other models of the church. Benson, for instance, explicitly articulates how the familial model is complemented by the institutional model. He, however, does not explicitly consider how it

is complemented by the models of discipleship, sacrament, herald and servant, though he makes a detailed presentation of all the six models of Dulles in his studies. Hankomoone moves a step further than Benson by presenting the familial model in the light of the six models of Dulles. This notwithstanding, we observe that whereas Dulles articulates only how his primary model complements the other models, Benson and Hankomoone present only how other models complement the primary model (*family of God*). Hence, in this study, a further step has been taken: the bridging of the above two *unidirectional* approaches into a *dual*-directional approach. That is, the model church-*family of God* has been 'symbiotically' harmonized with the models of discipleship, institution, sacrament, herald and servant. This was in view of achieving the third objective of this study.

The symbiotic harmonization was taken up in the first section of chapter seven, with the view to suggesting some theoretical prospects for the Catholic Church in Ghana. There seems to be an appreciable reception in *theory* of the familial model by the Catholic Church in Ghana. However, it seems the local church is lagging behind in the *theoretical* reception of a more comprehensive ecclesiology in which the familial model is a faithful contextual expression of the primary model of communion. In this respect we have made contributions in the following specific areas to enhance the *theoretical* reception of a comprehensive ecclesiology by the local church. The first contribution is the approach employed to demonstrate how the model church-*family of God* elucidates the conciliar primary model of communion in its four main dimensions of vertical-invisible, vertical-visible, horizontal-invisible and horizontal-visible in the Ghanaian context. The second contribution is the 'symbiotic' harmonization of the model church-*family of God* with Dulles' models of discipleship, institution, sacrament, herald and servant. In the process, it has been demonstrated, on the one hand, how the merits of the familial model could compensate for some weaknesses in the other models (*cf*. subsections 7.2.2-7.2.6). And, on the other hand,

it has been demonstrated how the weaknesses (including the disvalues of the Ghanaian concept of family) of the familial model could be compensated for in several ways (*cf.* subsections 7.2.2-7.2.6).

The third contribution is the indication that the relation between all the ecclesial constitutive elements (described with the aid of the models) and the mystery of the church is a kind of synergy. Despite the *gap of synergy*, Dulles' approach illuminates certain salient features of the mystery of the church. Thus, the church could be comprehended, *first of all,* as an eschatological-oriented *communion* of people with God, through Christ and in the Holy Spirit. This communion could be expressed as a *family of God*. On this earth, the *family of God* which is made up of *disciples*, and structured as an *institution* with various means of grace, is a sign and an instrument of salvation – a salvation which is proclaimed to all by the *heraldic* and *social* missions of the church.

In the second main section of chapter seven, we considered the last of the four objectives of this study: to suggest ways by which the sense of belonging, co-responsibility and active participation in the life and mission of the local church as a *family of God* could be enhanced in practice. With the assumption that the *theoretical* reception of the *family*-based ecclesiology would be accompanied by 'a pastoral and missionary conversion',[1148] this thesis holds the view that the reception in *practice* would be greatly enhanced if there is a renewal of the local church's organizational structures and leadership styles. In this study we have dwelt more on the re-structuring of the organizational structures and only mentioned the need for change in the leadership style of the clergy. Secondly, our proposals have largely been determined by our attempts to respond to the lapses in practical reception as revealed by our fieldwork.

[1148] *Evangelium gaudium*, no. 25.

From a present organizational structure made up of five levels (parish, deanery, diocese, ecclesiastical province, church on the national level) in which the second and fourth levels are weak links, we have proposed, firstly, that the weak links should be strengthened; and secondly that two more basic levels should be introduced: the 'domestic church' and SCC. Thus, in the proposed new way of being church, the Catholic Church in Ghana would be organized on seven closely linked levels (domestic church, SCC, parish community, deanery community, diocesan church, ecclesiastical province and church on the national level) of spiral-like concentric circles, such that the first two organs are not only given statutory roles but are made to function effectively in practice. With a strong sense of belonging created at the basic levels of domestic churches and SCCs many more Catholics would feel belonging to the larger community of the parish and beyond. Furthermore, based on this new structure of a *family of interrelated concentric circles*, we have also proposed the adoption of a consensus building process for decision-making in the church. Creating such a strong sense of belonging and involving more Catholics in the church's decision-making process might greatly enhance the co-responsibility and active participation of all the faithful in the ecclesial life and mission, especially in her task of primary evangelization.

In additional, there is the need for mission-oriented training and ongoing formation of the clergy, religious, catechists, and other lay faithful for the realization of the above vision of the local church as a *family of God*. We have only given a few indications for training and formation in this study (*cf*. subsection 7.3.3). It is an area which needs further detailed study. Other areas which need further studies include: (a) the search for an effective leadership style that is rooted in a sound theology of the church as *family of God*; (b) a detailed study on the role of the (non-ordained) religious in the church as *family of*

God; (c) a detailed study on the role of lay women in the church as *family of God*; and (d) a detailed study on the prospects of the youth in the church as *family of God*.

Finally, though we see Dulles' multi-models' approach as a useful theological tool, it has some shortcomings. Firstly, though in theory all the models are supposed to be harmonized synchronically, in practice only two models could be harmonized at a time. Secondly, the models do not aid in explaining what constitutes the above-mentioned 'gap of synergy'; but neither are the traditional methods of systematic ecclesiology able to explain the entire mystery of the church. Thirdly, there is the tendency to overlook features of the church which the models do not readily illuminate. This, for instance, seems to partly explain why the pneumatological character of the church is not adequately highlighted by Dulles (*cf*. subsection 3.8.2). Fourthly, there is the possibility of an 'artificially constructed'[1149] model becoming a distorted lens for perceiving and, therefore, for describing some aspects of the mystery of the church. This, for instance, seems to be the case when Dulles initially articulated the institutional model of the church (*cf*. subsection 3.8.2). For these and other reasons, the models-method should be employed critically, and it should be complemented with other methods and materials in the process of a theological articulation.

[1149] Dulles, *Models of Revelation*, p. 30; *cf*. subsection 1.5.3.

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APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CLERGY AND RELIGIOUS

THESIS TITLE: THE RECEPTION OF THE ECCLESIOLOGY OF VATICAN II:
SOME PROSPECTS FOR THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN GHANA

INTRODUCTION

Purpose: Vatican II uses several images and concepts to describe the mystery of the church. The research (for which this questionnaire is designed) focuses on the concept of the 'church as communion' – a concept which could be contextualized in Africa as 'church as family of God'. This concept advocates for a greater participation and co-responsibility by all Christ's faithful in the life and mission of the church. The purpose of this questionnaire is to enable me ascertain from *the clergy/religious* the degree of reception of the 'communion' ecclesiology of Vatican II in the local church (Ghana), with the view of making some proposals for better participation and co-responsibility by all Christ's faithful. This forms part of PhD dissertation that I am presenting at the University of Ghana.

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The completion of this questionnaire may take about 30 minutes. I wish to collect it on the day I visit your parish/institution in May/June, 2013. Thank you, and may God bless you.

BASIC DATA

- Name of (Arch) diocese: ……
- Name of Deanery: ……..
- Name of Parish/Institution: ……
- Location of Parish: ……..
- Position/Office in Parish/Institution: ……
- Year of appointment to Parish/Institution: ……..
- [*To parish priest/assistant*] Are you resident in your parish? Yes: ….. No:……...
- [*To parish priest/assistant*] Has your (arch)bishop assigned you additional responsibilities (e.g. Vicar General, duties at diocesan secretariat, teaching)? Yes: …….. No:……...

PART I

1. a) Indicate (√) the councils/commissions/committees in your (arch)diocese, showing whether they are functioning or not [*A council/commission/committee is considered as '**not** functioning' either if its last meeting was held more than a year ago, or there exists an official or unofficial body/person which/who has taken over its functions*]:

Council/Commission	**Established**	**Functioning**	**Not Functioning**
College of Consultors			
Council of Priests (Senate)			
Diocesan Pastoral Council			
Diocesan Laity Council			
Diocesan Women's Council			
Diocesan Youth Council			
Diocesan Liturgical Commission			
Diocesan Catechetical Commission			
Diocesan Health Commission			
Diocesan Justice & Peace Commission			
Diocesan Education Committee			
Diocesan Evangelization Committee			
Diocesan Biblical Apostolate Team			
Diocesan Finance Committee			
Diocesan Projects/Building Committee			
Diocesan Vocation Committee			
Diocesan Communications Committee			
Diocesan Pontifical Mission Societies			

b) Of which of the above councils/committees/commissions are/were you a member? [*Please indicate the **term** of office in the brackets*]

……(.....)

……(……..……)

2. a) (i) [*Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with this statement*] Members of the councils/committees are satisfactorily engaged by the local ordinary in the decision-making process of our (arch)diocese:

Strongly agree [ ]
Agree [ ]
Neutral (no opinion) [ ]
Disagree [ ]
Strongly disagree [ ]

(ii) Give reason(s) for your answer: ……
…….

b) How often does your (arch)bishop approve the decisions (proposals) of the (arch) diocesan councils/committees? Always [ ]
Usually [ ]
Sometimes [ ]
Rarely [ ]
Never [ ]

3. a) [*Indicate the councils/commissions/committees in your deanery, showing whether they are functioning or not:*]

Council/Committee	**Established**	**Functioning**	**Not Functioning**
Deanery Council of Priests			
Deanery Pastoral Council			
Deanery Laity Council			
Deanery Women's Council			
Deanery Youth Council			
Deanery Liturgical Committee			
Deanery Catechetical Committee			
Deanery Health Committee			
Deanery Justice and Peace Committee			
Deanery Education Committee			
Deanery Evangelization Committee			
Deanery Biblical Apostolate Committee			
Deanery Finance Committee			
Deanery Projects/ Building Committee			
Deanery Vocation Committee			

b) Of which of the above councils/committees are/were you a member? [*Please indicate your term of office in the brackets*]
……(……..)
……(……..)
……(……..)

c) How often do the proposals of the deanery councils/committees receive the (arch)bishop's approval?

Always [ ]
Usually [ ]
Sometimes [ ]
Rarely [ ]
Never [ ]

4. a) How would you assess the sense of fraternity between you and your assistant/parish priest (*or priests in neighbouring parishes, if you are the only priest in the parish*)?

Very good [ ]
Good [ ]
Average [ ]
Poor [ ]
Very poor [ ]

b) How would you assess your assistant/parish priest's level of co-operation and collaboration?

Very good [ ]
Good [ ]
Average [ ]
Poor [ ]
Very poor [ ]

5. a) [*Indicate (√) the councils/committees in your parish, showing whether they are functioning or not*:]

Council/Committee	**Established**	**Functioning**	**Not functioning**
Laity Council			
Parish Youth Council (PYC)			
Liturgical Committee			
Catechetical Committee			
Health Committee			
Justice and Peace Committee			
Education Committee			
Evangelization Committee			
Biblical Apostolate Comm.			
Finance Committee			
Projects/Building Committee			
Vocation Committee			

b) Of which of the above committees are you a member/chairman? [*Specify your membership or chairmanship in the brackets*.]

……(……)
……(……)
……(……...)

c) (i) Members of the committees have been satisfactorily engaged in the decision-making process of my parish:
Strongly Agree [ ]
Agree [ ]
Neutral (no opinion) [ ]
Disagree [ ]
Strongly Disagree [ ]

(ii) Give reason(s) for your answer: ……
……

d) How often do the proposals/decisions of the councils/committees receive the approval of the parish priest?
Always [ ]
Usually [ ]
Sometimes [ ]
Rarely [ ]
Never [ ]

e) (i) Among the laity of my parish, there is a strong sense of joint responsibility (with the clergy) for evangelization:
Strongly Agree [ ]
Agree [ ]
Neutral (no opinion) [ ]
Disagree [ ]
Strongly Disagree [ ]

(ii) Give reason(s) for your answer: ……
……

f) (i) Among the laity of my parish, there is a strong sense of joint ownership of church projects:
Strongly Agree [ ]
Agree [ ]
Neutral (no opinion) [ ]
Disagree [ ]
Strongly Disagree [ ]

(ii) Give reason(s) for your answer: ……
……

6. a) If you have a PYC, how often does the ***parish priest*** meet the PYC (executive)?
Monthly [ ]
Quarterly [ ]
Biannually [ ]
Annually/Less often [ ]
Never [ ]

b) (i) How would you assess the sense among the youth of joint responsibility (with the clergy) for church ministry in your parish?
Very Good [ ]
Good [ ]
Average [ ]
Poor [ ]
Very Poor [ ]

(ii) Give reason(s) for your answer: ……
……

b) (i) How would you assess the sense among the youth of joint ownership of church projects/properties? Very Good [ ]
Good [ ]
Average [ ]
Poor [ ]
Very Poor [ ]

(ii) Give reason(s) for your answer: ……
……

7. [*Indicate* (√) *the extent to which the general body of parishioners are engaged in the decision-making process* ***through open forums and suggestion boxes***:]

		Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
a	Open forums are regularly organized in my parish.	[quarterly]	[biannually]	[annually]	[rarely]	[no forums]
b	Lay church members participate satisfactorily in the open forums.					[no forums]
c	The tone of discussions at the forums is usually cordial.					[no forums]
d	Lay church members satisfactorily make use of the parish suggestion box(es).					[no suggestion boxes]
e	The priests satisfactorily implement suggestions made by the lay church members.					[no forums/ suggestion boxes]

PART II

8. a) Have you read or attended any course/seminar on Vatican II's *Lumen gentium* since your ordination? Yes ……. No …….
   b) Indicate the ***order*** of importance of the following conciliar concepts of the church, using the ***numbers 1 to 5*** [*the number '1' means the most important and '5' the least important;* ***each number*** *should be used* ***only once***]:
      [ ] The church is a hierarchical institution of the clergy, religious and laity.
      [ ] The church is the body of Christ.
      [ ] The church is a sacrament of salvation in Christ.
      [ ] The church is the people of God.
      [ ] The church is the communion of all faithful with God and among themselves.

9. The first African Synod of Bishops describes the church as 'family of God'. In what ways does your parish experience the church as 'family of God' (if any)?
   (i)……
   (ii)……
   (iii)……

10. a) Have you read the *Instrumentum Laboris* of the first National Catholic Pastoral Congress held in Cape Coast (1997)? Yes: ….. No: ……
    b) Have you read the outcome (*Pastoral Guidelines*) of the above Congress? Yes:…… No: ……
    c) In line with the first African Synod, the above National Pastoral Congress recommends Small or Basic Christian Communities (SCC/BCCs) as a way of experiencing the 'church as family of God' in parishes.
       (i) Do you have SCC/BCCs in your parish? Yes: …..….. No:……...
       (ii) If yes, how long ago were the SCC/BCCs established in your parish? ...……
       (iii) If no, were there attempts in the past to establish SCC/BCCs in your parish? Yes: …… No: ……
       (iv) If yes, what were the reasons for the failed attempts? ……
    ……

11. a) Have you had (arch)diocesan synod(s)? Yes: ……. No: ……
    b) *If yes, indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements*:

		Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
i	Priests and religious of the (arch)diocese were adequately consulted in the formulations of the *lineamenta* and *instrumentum laboris* of the synod(s).					
ii	Priests and religious participated well in the deliberations of the synod(s).					
iii	The lay faithful of the diocese were adequately consulted in the formulations of the *lineamenta* and *instrumentum laboris* of the synod(s).					

iv	The lay faithful participated well in the deliberations of the synod(s).					
v	Most of the synodal proposals were approved by the (arch)bishop.					
vi	Most of the Acts of the synod have been implemented in the parishes and diocesan institutions.					

c) Did your (arch)diocesan synod discuss issues concerning the promotion and fostering of the church in the parishes and outstations as 'family of God'? Yes: ….. No: ……

d) If yes, what were some of these issues?

……
……
……
……

e) Since the (arch)diocesan synod, which activities or programmes have you instituted to foster the church as family of God in your parish and outstations?

……
……
……
……

12. What would you suggest for the Catholic Church to become more truly a family of God in your parish and/or (arch)diocese?

……
……
……
……
……
……
……

APPENDIX II: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE LAITY

THESIS TITLE: THE RECEPTION OF THE ECCLESIOLOGY OF VATICAN II:
SOME PROSPECTS FOR THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN GHANA

INTRODUCTION

Purpose: The Second Vatican Council (Vatican II) uses several images and concepts to describe the church. This research focuses on the description of the church as 'communion', which could be expressed in the African context as 'family of God'. This concept advocates for a greater participation by all Christ's faithful in the life and mission of the church. The purpose of this questionnaire is to enable me ascertain the extent to which the *lay faithful* in your parish have received this teaching of Vatican II. This is in view of making some proposals for better participation by all Christ's faithful in the local church. This forms part of PhD dissertation that I am presenting at the University of Ghana (Legon).

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The completion of this questionnaire may take about 20 minutes. I wish to collect it on the day I visit your parish/institution in May/June, 2013. Thank you, and may God bless you.

BASIC DATA

- Name of (Arch) diocese: ……..
- Name & Location of Parish:
  ……
- Length of stay in the parish by respondent .....years
- Gender of respondent: Male [ ], Female [ ].

MAIN QUESTIONNAIRE

1. a) Do you have a parish (pastoral) council? Yes: ….. No: ……
   b) If yes, are/were you a member of the council? Yes: ….. No: .....

2. a) (i) [*Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statement*]
   Lay members of our parish (pastoral) council are satisfactorily involved in the decision-making process of my parish: Strongly agree [ ]
   Agree [ ]
   Neutral (no opinion) [ ]
   Disagree [ ]
   Strongly disagree [ ]
   (ii) Give reason(s) for your answer: ……

b) How often does your parish priest approve the decisions (proposals) of the parish council? Always [ ]
Usually [ ]
Sometimes [ ]
Rarely [ ]
Never [ ]

3. a) Indicate (√) the councils/committees in your parish, showing whether they are functioning or not [*A council/committee is considered as '**not** functioning' either if its last meeting was held more than a year ago, or there exists an official or unofficial body/person which/who has taken over its functions*]:

Council/Committee	**Established**	**Functioning**	**Not functioning**
Laity Council			
Youth Council			
Liturgical Committee			
Catechetical Committee			
Health Committee			
Justice and Peace Committee			
Education Committee			
Evangelization Committee			
Biblical Apostolate Comm.			
Finance Committee			
Projects/Building Committee			
Vocation Committee			

b) Of which of the above committees are/were you a member?
……
……

4. a) (i) Members of the committees are satisfactorily involved in the decision-making process of my parish: Strongly agree [ ]
Agree [ ]
Neutral (no opinion) [ ]
Disagree [ ]
Strongly disagree [ ]

(ii) Give reason(s) for your answer: ……
……..

b) How often does your parish priest approve the proposals of the committees?
Always [ ]
Usually [ ]
Sometimes [ ]
Rarely [ ]
Never [ ]

5. [*Indicate* (√) *the extent to which the general body of church members are engaged in the decision-making process* ***through open forums and suggestion boxes***:]

		Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	
a	Open forums are regularly organized in my parish.	[quarterly]	[biannually]	[annually]	[rarely]	
b	Lay church members participate satisfactorily in the open forums.					
c	The tone of discussions at the forums is usually cordial.					
d	Lay church members satisfactorily make use of the parish suggestion box(es).					[no suggestion boxes]
e	The priests satisfactorily implement suggestions made by the lay church members.					[no forums/ suggestion boxes]

6. [*Indicate* (√) *the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements on joint-responsibility and –ownership in your parish*:]

		Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
a	Among the laity of my parish, there is a strong sense of joint responsibility (with the clergy) for evangelization.					
b	Among the laity of my parish, there is a strong sense of joint ownership of church projects.					
c	The laity in my parish consider the amounts charged as harvest/project levies as reasonable.					
d	There is a high degree of payment of harvest/project levies in my parish.					
e	Among the **youth** of my parish, there is a strong sense of joint responsibility (with the clergy) for evangelization.					
f	Among our **youth**, there is a strong sense of joint ownership of church projects.					

7. [*Indicate* (√) *how the following statements reflect the present situation in your parish*.]

		Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
a	The church in my parish is experienced as a society for mainly spiritual activities, with less bonding among members.					
b	The church in my parish is experienced as a social welfare community with inadequate spiritual emphasis.					
c	The church in my parish is experienced as a society which lacks both sound spirituality and we-feeling among members.					
d	The church in my parish is experienced as a caring family in Christ with deep spirituality.					

8. a) Have you heard of the Second Vatican Council (Vatican II)? Yes: ……. No: …….
   b) Vatican II considers 'communion' as a key concept of the church. The two African Synods of Bishops consider 'church as family of God' as an appropriate way of expressing the 'communion' concept in the African context.
   In what ways do you experience the church as 'family of God' in your parish (if any)?
   (i)……
   (ii)……
   (iii)……
   ……..
9. a) Do you know that the Catholic Church in Ghana held its first National Pastoral Congress in Cape Coast (1997) to deliberate on the fruits of the first African Synod of Bishops? Yes: …… No: ……
   b) In line with the first African Synod, the above National Pastoral Congress recommends Small or Basic Christian Communities (SCC/BCCs) as a way of realizing the 'church as family of God' in parishes.
   Do you have SCC/BCCs in your parish? Yes: …..….. No:……...
   c) If yes, how long ago were the SCC/BCCs established in your parish? ...…….
   d) If there are SCC/BCCs in your parish, how often do members meet?

   Weekly [ ]
   Bi-Weekly [ ]
   Monthly [ ]
   Quarterly [ ]
   Other (specify): [ ]

e) (i) How would you assess the attendance at the SCC/BCCs meetings?

Very Good [ ]
Good [ ]
Average [ ]
Poor [ ]
Very Poor [ ]

(ii) Give reason(s) for your answer: ……
……..

f) (i) How would you assess the level of participation during discussions at SCC/BCCs meetings?

Very good [ ]
Good [ ]
Average [ ]
Poor [ ]
Very poor [ ]

(ii) Give reason(s) for your answer: ……
……..

10. What would you suggest for the Catholic Church to become more truly a 'family of God' in your community and/or parish?

……
……
……
……
……
……

APPENDIX III: COMPOSITION OF CLERGY AND RELIGIOUS SAMPLE

Table 1: Summary of Clergy and Religious Respondents according to the Dioceses

No.	Diocese	No. of Questionnaire Distributed	No. of Questionnaire Completed & Returned	No. of Interviewees	Total No. of Respondents
1	Cape Coast	9	9	3	12
2	Wiawso	8	8	4	12
3	Kumasi	8	8	4	12
4	Goaso	8	6	6	12
5	Tamale	8	2	6	8
6	Keta-Akatsi	8	7	4	11
7	Koforidua	9	9	3	12
8	Wa	7	7	5	12
9	Accra	4	4	8	12
10	Others	0	0	2	2
	Totals	69	60	45	105

DETAILS OF CLERGY AND RELIGIOUS RESPONDENTS ACCORDING TO THE DIOCESES

Table 2: Clergy and Religious Respondents of Cape Coast Archdiocese

Date	Parish	No. of Questionnaire Completed & Returned	No. of Interviewees
5 May 2013	Immaculate Conception Church (Assin Fosu)	2	0
6 May 2013	St. Francis Cathedral (Cape Coast)	2	0
7 May 2013	St. Joseph Minor Basilica (Elmina)	2	0
7 May 2013	Mary Immaculate Church (Anomabo)*	0	1
8 May 2013	Our Lady of Assumption Church (Agona Nyakrom)	2	0
	Other Clergy and Religious	1	2
	Totals of Cape Coast Archdiocese	9	3

*NB: Mary Immaculate Church (Anomabo) was not initially part of the parishes scheduled for this research. However, heeding to a suggestion by the priests at Assin Fosu, I visited the parish to meet some leaders of the SCCs, as well as the parish priest there.

Table 3: Clergy and Religious Respondents of Wiawso Diocese

Date	Parish	No. of Questionnaire Completed & Returned	No. of Interviewees
12 May 2013	St. Benedict Church (Sefwi-Bekwai)	1	0
12 May 2013	St. Joseph Cathedral (Wiawso)	1	1
13 May 2013	St. Anthony Church (Juaboso)	0	1
14 May 2013	St. Peter Church (Asawinso)	1	0
	Other Clergy and Religious	5	2
	Totals of Wiawso Diocese	8	4

Table 4: Clergy and Religious Respondents of Kumasi Archdiocese

Date	Parish	No. of Questionnaire Completed & Returned	No. of Interviewees
18 May 2013	St. Peter Minor Basilica (Cathedral) (Kumasi)	2	0
21 May 2013	St. Theresa Church (Asawase)	2	0
22 May 2013	St. Paul Church (Nyinahin)	0	2
23 May 2013	St. James Church (Akomadan)	2	0
	Other Clergy and Religious	2	2
	Totals of Kumasi Archdiocese	8	4

Table 5: Clergy and Religious Respondents of Goaso Diocese

Date	Parish	No. of Questionnaire Completed & Returned	No. of Interviewees
26 May 2013	St. Anthony of Padua Cathedral (Goaso)	1	1
27 May 2013	Our Lady of Perpetual Succour Church (Mim)	3	0
28 May 2013	St. Mary, Queen of Peace Church (Tepa)	2	0
29 May 2013	St. Anthony Church (Yamfo)	0	2
	Other Clergy and Religious	0	3
	Totals of Goaso Diocese	6	6

Table 6: Clergy and Religious Respondents of Tamale Archdiocese

Date	Parish	No. of Questionnaire Completed & Returned	No. of Interviewees
2 June 2013	Our Lady of Annunciation Cathedral (Tamale)	2	0
4 June 2013	Holy Cross Church (Choggu)	0	2
no visit	Sacred Heart Church (Fuo)	0	0
no visit	St. Kizito Church (Kpandai)	0	0
	Other Clergy and Religious	0	4
	Totals of Tamale Archdiocese	2	6

Table 7: Clergy and Religious Respondents of Keta-Akatsi Diocese

Date	Parish	No. of Questionnaire Completed & Returned	No. of Interviewees
16 June 2013	St. Peter Claver Church (Dzelukope)	2	0
17 June 2013	Holy Trinity Church (Tadzewu)	1	0
18 June 2013	Sts. Peter and Paul Church (Dzodze)	2	0
19 June 2013	The Risen Christ Church (Adidome)	2	0
	Other Clergy and Religious	0	4
	Totals of Keta-Akatsi Diocese	7	4

Table 8: Clergy and Religious Respondents of Koforidua Diocese

Date	Parish	No. of Questionnaire Completed & Returned	No. of Interviewees
23 June 2013	St. George Cathedral (Koforidua)	3	0
25 June 2013	St. Theresa Church (Kwahu Praso)	1	0
27 June 2013	St. Augustine Church (Asesewa)	1	1
27 June 2013	Holy Trinity Church (Agomenya)*	0	0
30 June 2013	St. Joseph the Worker Church (Nsawam-Adoagyiri)	1	0
	Other Clergy and Religious	3	2
	Totals of Koforidua Diocese	9	3

*NB: Holy Trinity Church (Agomenya) was included for only group discussion upon the recommendation of my supervisor, Dr. George Ossom-Batsa. By then the schedule for the visits to the initial four parishes had already been fixed and questionnaires posted.

Table 9: Clergy and Religious Respondents of Wa Diocese

DATE	Parish	No. of Questionnaire Completed & Returned	No. of Interviewees
28 July 2013	St. Joseph Church (Jirapa)	1	0
30 July 2013	St. Cecilia Church (Wa)	2	0
	St. Theresa of the Child Jesus Minor Basilica:		
1 Aug. 2013	An Outstation Church (Bo)*	0	0
2 Aug. 2013	Main Station (Nandom)	2	1
3 Aug. 2013	Nativity of Our Lady Church (Ko)	1	0
	Other Clergy and Religious	1	4
	Totals of Wa Diocese	7	5

*NB: The rector of the Minor Basilica had arranged that I visited the outstation church in the village of Bo, because of the well-established SCCs there. We had only group discussions there.

Table 10: Clergy and Religious Respondents of Accra Archdiocese

Date	Parish	No. of Questionnaire Completed & Returned	No. of Interviewees
25 Aug. 2013	Holy Spirit Cathedral (Adabraka)	0	2
27 Aug. 2013	Star of the Sea Church (Dansoman)	1	1
28 Aug. 2013	St. Kizito Church (Nima)*	1	1
1 Sept. 2013	St. Mary Church (Korluedor)	0	1
	Other Clergy and Religious	2	3
	Totals of Accra Archdiocese	4	8

*NB: Nima was considered as an urban deprived community in place of a rural one.

Table 11: Other Interviews

Date	Place	Name of Interviewees	Office of Interviewees
24 July 2013	Kumasi	Peter K Sarpong	Archbishop Emeritus of Kumasi
25 July 2013	Mampong	Joseph Osei-Bonsu	Bishop of Konongo-Mampong, and President of Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference

APPENDIX IV: COMPOSITION OF LAITY SAMPLE

Table 12: Summary of Lay Respondents according to the Dioceses

No.	Diocese	No. of Questionnaires Distributed	No. of Questionnaires Completed & Returned	No. of Interviewees	Participants of Group Discussions	Total No. of Respondents
1	Cape Coast	70	62	24	39	125
2	Wiawso	70	57	50	0	107
3	Kumasi	70	65	16	34	115
4	Goaso	40	32	25	51	108
5	Tamale	50	37	10	32	79
6	Keta-Akatsi	70	65	3	51	119
7	Koforidua	60	57	7	58	122
8	Wa	30	22	0	103	125
9	Accra	70	57	10	60	127
	Totals	530	454	145	428	1027

NB:

Expected total no. of lay respondents= 9 (dioceses) X 4 (parishes) X 30 (persons) = 1,080

Total no. of distributed questionnaires = 530

No. of questionnaires not returned = 530 - 454 = 76.

Expected respondents by interviews and group discussions = 1,080 - 530 = 550

Actual no. of respondents by interviews and group discussions = 145 + 428 = 573 (i.e. 23 more than expected). The 23 extra respondents came from additional participants of group discussions in Cape Coast Archdiocese, Accra Archdiocese, Koforidua Diocese and Wa Diocese, as noted in the details given below.

DETAILS OF LAY RESPONDENTS ACCORDING TO THE DIOCESES

Table 13: Lay Respondents of Cape Coast Archdiocese

Date	Parish	No. of Questionnaires Completed & Returned	No. of Interviewees	Participants of Group Discussions
5 May 2013	Immaculate Conception Church (Assin Fosu)	16	14	0
6 May 2013	St. Francis Cathedral (Cape Coast)	15	10	5
7 May 2013	St. Joseph Minor Basilica (Elmina)	16	0	14
7 May 2013	Mary Immaculate Church (Anomabo)*	0	0	5
8 May 2013	Our Lady of Assumption Church (Agona Nyakrom)	15	0	15
	Totals of Cape Coast Archdiocese	62	24	39

*NB: Mary Immaculate Church was not initially part of the parishes scheduled for this research. However, with the suggestion of the priests at Assin Fosu, I visited the parish to meet some leaders of the SCCs as well as the parish priest there.

Table 14: Lay Respondents of Wiawso Diocese

Date	Parish	No. of Questionnaires Completed & Returned	No. of Interviewees	Participants of Group Discussions
12 May 2013	St. Benedict Church (Sefwi-Bekwai)	20	10	0
12 May 2013	St. Joseph Cathedral (Wiawso)	20	10	0
13 May 2013	St. Anthony Church (Juaboso)	7	15	0
14 May 2013	St. Peter Church (Asawinso)	10	15	0
	Totals of Wiawso Diocese	57	50	0

Table 15: Lay Respondents of Kumasi Archdiocese

Date	Parish	No. of Questionnaires Completed & Returned	No. of Interviewees	Participants of Group Discussions
18 May 2013	St. Peter Minor Basilica (Cathedral, Kumasi)	15	7	8
21 May 2013	St. Theresa Church (Asawase)	20	0	10
22 May 2013	St. Paul Church (Nyinahin)	10	4	11
23 May 2013	St. James Church (Akomadan)	20	5	5
	Totals of Kumasi Archdiocese	65	16	34

Table 16: Lay Respondents of Goaso Diocese

Date	Parish	No. of Ques. Completed & Returned	No. of Interviewees	Participants Group Disc.
26 May 2013	St. Anthony of Padua Cathedral (Goaso)	6	10	10
27 May 2013	Our Lady of Perpetual Succour Church (Mim)	7	15	0
28 May 2013	St. Mary, Queen of Peace Church (Tepa)	9	0	21
29 May 2013	St. Anthony Church (Yamfo)	10	0	20
	Totals of Goaso Diocese	32	25	51

Table 17: Lay Respondents of Tamale Archdiocese

Date	Parish	No. of Questionnaires Completed & Returned	No. of Interviewees	Participants of Group Discussions
2 June 2013	Our Lady of Annunciation Cathedral (Tamale)	8	0	22
4 June 2013	Holy Cross Church (Choggu)	5	10	10
no visit	Sacred Heart Church (Fuo)	5	0	0
no visit	St. Kizito Church (Kpandai)	19	0	0
	Totals of Archdiocese	37	10	32

Table 18: Lay Respondents of Keta-Akatsi Diocese

Date	Parish	No. of Questionnaires Completed & Returned	No. of Interviewees	Participants of Group Discussions
16 June 2013	St. Peter Claver Church (Dzelukope)	20	0	10
17 June 2013	Holy Trinity Church (Tadzewu)	20	0	10
18 June 2013	Sts. Peter and Paul Church (Dzodze)	10	0	20
19 June 2013	The Risen Christ Church (Adidome)	15	3	11
	Totals of Keta-Akatsi Diocese	65	3	51

Table 19: Lay Respondents of Koforidua Diocese

Date	Parish	No. of Questionnaires Completed & Returned	No. of Interviewees	Participants of Group Discussions
23 June 2013	St. George Cathedral (Koforidua)	10	0	13
25 June 2013	St. Theresa Church (Kwahu Praso)	16	3	10
27 June 2013	St. Augustine Church (Asesewa)	15	4	8
27 June 2013	Holy Trinity Church (Agomenya)*			15
30 June 2013	St. Joseph the Worker Church (Nsawam-Adoagyiri)	16	0	12
	Totals of Koforidua Diocese	57	7	58

*NB: Holy Trinity Church (Agomenya) was included for only group discussion, after my supervisor, Dr. George Ossom-Batsa, had recommended a visit to the place. By then the schedule for the visit of the initial four parishes had already been fixed and questionnaires posted.

Table 20: Lay Respondents of Wa Diocese

Date	Parish	No. of Questionnaires Completed & Returned	No. of Interviewees	Participants of Group Discussions
28 July 2013	St. Joseph Church (Jirapa)	5	0	25
30 July 2013	St. Cecilia Church (Wa)	4	0	14
1 Aug. 2013	St. Theresa of the Child Jesus <u>Minor Basilica:</u> An Outstation Church (Bo)*	0	0	21
2 Aug. 2013	Main Station (Nandom)	8	0	23
3 Aug. 2013	Nativity of Our Lady Church (Ko)	5	0	20
	Totals of Wa Diocese	22	0	103

*NB: The rector of the Minor Basilica had arranged that I visited the outstation church in the village of Bo, because of the well-established SCCs there. We had only group discussions there.

Table 21: Lay Respondents of Accra Archdiocese

Date	Parish	No. of Questionnaires Completed & Returned	No. of Interviewees	Participants of Group Discussions
25 Aug. 2013	Holy Spirit Cathedral (Adabraka)	20	10	10
27 Aug. 2013	Star of the Sea Church (Dansoman)	15	0	15
28 Aug. 2013	St. Kizito Church (Nima)*	12	0	20
1 Sept. 2013	St. Mary Church (Korluedor)	10	0	15
	Totals of Accra Archdiocese	57	10	60

*NB: Nima was considered as an urban deprived community in place of a rural community.

APPENDIX V: DATA ANALYSIS OF CLERGY'S AND RELIGIOUS' RESPONSES TO QUESTIONNAIRE AND INTERVIEWS

Table 22: Established and Functioning Diocesan Councils and Commissions

Council/Commission	Established Frequency	%	Functioning frequency	%
College of Consultors	101	98.0	101	100.0
Council of Priests	99	96.1	99	100.0
Diocesan Pastoral Council	73	70.9	73	100.0
Diocesan Laity Council	101	98.0	101	100.0
Diocesan Women's Council	89	86.4	89	100.0
Diocesan Youth Council	99	96.1	99	100.0
Diocesan Liturgical Council	87	84.5	83	95.4
Diocesan Catechetical Council	91	88.3	89	97.8
Diocesan Health Commission	75	72.8	75	100.0
Diocesan Justice and Peace Commission	95	92.2	91	95.8
Diocesan Education Committee	82	79.6	78	95.1
Diocesan Evangelization Committee	36	35.0	34	94.4
Diocesan Biblical Apostolate Team	67	65.0	61	91.0
Diocesan Finance Committee	81	78.6	81	100.0
Diocesan Projects/Building Committee	69	67.0	67	97.1
Diocesan Vocation Committee	99	96.1	99	100.0
Diocesan Communications Committee	69	67.0	67	97.1
Diocesan Pontifical Mission Societies	69	67.0	67	97.1

NB: (a) The above statistics are based on a total of 103 clergy and religious; i.e. excluding Archbishop Peter K. Sarpong and Bishop Rev. Joseph Osei-Bonsu.

(b) The percentages (%) of the functioning councils/committees are based on the number of established councils/committees.

Table 23: Members of the Councils/Committees are Satisfactorily Engaged by the Local Ordinary in the Decision-Making Process of the Diocese.

Response	Freq.	%
Strongly agree	19	18.1
Agree	62	59.0
Neutral	13	12.4
Disagree	11	10.5
Total	105	100.0

NB: Of the 45 clergy and religious who were interviewed, 10 (22.2%) of them disagreed with the assertion that the college of consultors and priests' council are functioning satisfactorily.

Table 24: How often Proposals of the Diocesan Councils/Committees are approved by the Bishop

Response	Freq.	%
Always	14	13.3
Usually	60	57.1
Sometimes	22	21.0
Rarely	9	8.6
Total	105	100.0

Table 25: Established and Functioning Councils and Committees in the Deaneries.

	Established		Functioning	
Council/Commission	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Deanery Council of Priests	84	81.6	80	95.2
Deanery Pastoral Council	39	37.9	27	69.2
Deanery Laity Council	49	47.6	45	91.8
Deanery Women's Council	41	39.8	37	90.2
Deanery Youth Council	80	77.7	78	97.5
Deanery Liturgical Council	31	30.1	22	71.0
Deanery Catechetical Council	37	35.9	26	70.3
Deanery Health Committee	10	9.7	6	60.0
Deanery Justice and Peace Committee	33	32.0	26	78.8
Deanery Education Committee	19	18.4	10	52.6
Deanery Evangelization Committee	14	13.6	10	71.4
Deanery Biblical Apostolate Committee	8	7.8	6	75.0
Deanery Finance Committee	17	16.5	10	58.8
Deanery Projects/Building Committee	10	9.7	6	60.0
Deanery Vocation Committee	20	19.4	18	90.0

NB: (a) The above statistics are based on a total of 103 clergy and religious; i.e. excluding Archbishop Sarpong and Bishop Osei-Bonsu.

(b) The percentages (%) of the functioning councils/committees are based on the number of established councils/committees.

Table 26: Established and Functioning Councils/Committees in the Parishes.

Council/Committees	Established		Functioning	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Parish Pastoral Council	93	90.3	93	100.0
Laity Council	91	88.3	87	95.6
Parish Youth Council	88	85.4	88	100.0
Liturgical Committee	71	68.9	69	97.2
Catechetical Committee	54	52.4	44	81.5
Health Committee	31	30.1	25	80.6
Justice and Peace Committee	56	54.4	54	96.4
Education Committee	43	41.7	35	81.4
Evangelisation Committee	22	21.4	20	90.9
Biblical Apostolate Committee	22	21.4	22	100.0
Finance Committee	93	90.3	89	95.7
Projects/Building Committee	78	75.7	76	97.4
Vocation Committee	37	35.9	35	94.6

NB: (a) This is based on a total of 103 respondents.

(b) The percentages (%) of the functioning councils/committees are based on the number of established councils/committees.

Table 27: Members of the Committees Have Been Satisfactorily Engaged in the Decision-Making Process of the Parishes.

Response	Freq.	%
Strongly agree	37	40.2
Agree	47	51.1
Neutral	8	8.7
Disagree	0	0
Total	92	100.0

NB: Total of Clergy Alone = 103 – 11 (Religious Sisters and Brothers) = 92

Table 28: How often Proposals of the Councils/Committees receive the Approval of the Parish Priest

Response	Freq.	%
Always	21	22.8
Usually	57	62.0
Sometimes	14	15.2
Rarely	0	0
Never	0	0
Total	92	100.0

Table 29: Updating Courses on Vatican II Attended by Clergy and Religious

Response	Yes	No	Total
Questionnaire	38	22	60
Interviews	30	15	45
Total	68	37	105

(a) Percentage of 'yes' responses = 68/105 % = 64.8%
(b) Percentage of 'no' responses = 37/105 % = 35.2%

Table 30: Order of Importance of Some Conciliar Concepts of the Church.

	Institution		Body of Christ		Sacrament		People of God		Communion	
Concepts	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Most important	5	4.8	46	43.8	8	7.6	24	22.9	22	20.9
More important	3	2.8	24	22.9	13	12.4	54	51.4	11	10.5
Important	13	12.4	22	20.9	30	28.6	16	15.2	24	22.9
Less important	5	4.8	5	4.8	49	46.6	11	10.5	35	33.3
Least important	79	75.2	8	7.6	5	4.8	0	0	13	12.4
Total	105	100	105	100	105	100	105	100	105	100

NB: The following is a summary of how respondents scored the importance of the various conciliar concepts:
Institution = 4.8+2.8+12.4% = 20.0%
Body of Christ = 43.8+22.9+20.9% = 87.6%
Sacrament = 7.6+12.4+28.6% = 48.6%
People of God = 22.9+51.4+15.2% = 89.5%
Communion = 20.9+10.5+22.9% = 54.3%

Table 31: Knowledge of Clergy and Religious about First (Ghana) National Pastoral Congress.

	Instrumentum Laboris		*Pastoral Guidelines*	
Response	Yes	No	Yes	No
Questionnaire	37	23	34	26
Interviews	27	18	22	23
Total	64	41	56	39

Instrumentum Laboris:
(a) Percentage of 'yes' responses = 64/105 % = 61.0%
(b) Percentage of 'no' responses = 41/105 % = 39.0%
Pastoral Guidelines:
(c) Percentage of 'yes' responses = 56/105 % =53.3%
(d) Percentage of 'no' responses = 39/105 % = 46.7%

Table 32: Implementations of Acts of Diocesan Synods

Response	Freq.	%
Strongly agree	2	2.7
Agree	23	31.5
Neutral	24	32.9
Disagree	18	24.7
Strongly disagree	6	8.2
Total	73	100.0

NB: Total no. of Respondents = clergy & religious respondents of 6 dioceses in which synods have been held + Archbishop Sarpong = 72 + 1 = 73.

Table 33: Establishment of SCCs in the Parishes: Responses of Clergy and Religious

Response	Yes	No	Total
Questionnaire	21	39	60
Interviews	11	24	35
Total	32	63	95

(a) The 10 bishops were not asked this question in their interviews, though they answered questions on the existence of SCCs in their diocese as a whole, and whether there was any policy for their promotion. Hence, the Total = 105-10 = 95.
(b) Percentage of 'yes' responses = 32/95 % = 33.7%
(c) Percentage of 'no' responses = 63/95 % = 66.2%

Table 34: The Number of Established SCCs which are Functioning: Clergy and Religious

Responses	Freq.	%
Functioning	15	46.9
Not Functioning/Extinct	17	53.1
Total	32	100.0

Table 35: Years of SCCs' Establishment: Clergy and Religious

Years	Freq.	%
Less than a year	1	3.1
1-9	18	56.3
10-19	9	28.1
20-29	2	6.3
30-39	1	3.1
40 and above	1	3.1
Total	32	100.0

APPENDIX VI: DATA ANALYSIS OF LAITY'S RESPONSES TO QUESTIONNAIRE AND INTERVIEWS

Table 36: Established and Functioning Councils/Committees in the Parishes

	Established		Functioning	
Council/Committees	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Pastoral Council	574	89.7	556	96.1
Laity Council	559	87.4	487	87.1
Youth Council	547	85.4	469	85.7
Liturgical Committee	440	68.8	388	88.2
Catechetical Committee	333	52.0	283	85.0
Health Committee	186	29.1	124	66.7
Justice and Peace Committee	347	54.2	261	75.2
Education Committee	267	41.7	129	48.3
Evangelisation Committee	133	20.7	89	66.9
Biblical Apostolate Committee	133	20.7	89	66.9
Finance Committee	573	89.5	541	94.1
Projects/Building Committee	479	74.9	427	89.1
Vocation Committee	226	35.3	158	70.0

NB: (a) The total lay respondents = 454 (completed quest.) + 186 (interviewees) = 640

(b) The percentages (%) of the functioning councils/committees are based on the number of established councils/committees.

Table 37: Combined Results of Established and Functioning Councils/Committees in the Parishes by Lay, Clergy and Religious Respondents

	Established		Functioning		Not Functioning	
Council/Committees:	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Pastoral Council	667	89.8	649	97.3	18	2.7
Laity Council	650	87.5	574	88.3	76	11.7
Youth Council	635	85.5	557	87.7	78	12.3
Liturgical Com.	511	68.8	457	89.4	54	10.6
Catechetical Com.	387	52.1	327	84.5	50	15.5
Health Com.	217	29.2	149	68.7	68	31.3
Justice & Peace Com.	403	54.2	315	78.2	88	21.8
Education Com.	310	41.7	164	52.9	136	47.1
Evangelization Com.	155	20.9	109	70.3	46	29.7
Biblical Apos. Com.	155	20.9	111	71.6	44	28.4
Finance Com.	666	89.6	630	94.6	36	5.4
Proj./Building Com.	557	75.0	503	90.3	54	9.7
Vocation Com.	263	35.4	193	73.4	70	26.4

NB: (a) The total respondents = 640 (laity) + 103 (clergy and religious) = 743

(b) The percentages (%) of the functioning councils/committees are based on the number of established councils/committees.

Table 38: Lay Members' Involvement in Decision-Making

Response	Freq.	%
Strongly agree	91	14.2
Agree	259	40.5
Neutral	131	20.4
Disagree	142	22.2
Strongly disagree	17	2.7
Total	640	100.0

Table 39: Rate of Approval of Proposals by Parish Priest

Response	Freq.	%
Always	81	12.7
Usually	247	38.6
Sometimes	254	39.7
Rarely	56	8.7
Never	2	0.3
Total	640	100.0

Table 40: Frequency of Open Forums in Parishes: At Least, Twice a Year

Response	Freq.	%
Strongly agree	94	14.7
Agree	130	20.3
Neutral	136	21.3
Disagree	166	25.9
Strongly disagree	114	17.8
Total	640	100.0

Table 41: Use of Suggestion Boxes in Parishes

Response	Freq.	%
Strongly agree	19	3.0
Agree	66	10.3
Neutral	71	11.1
Disagree	133	20.8
Strongly disagree	351	54.8
Total	640	100.0

Table 42: Priests Satisfactorily Implement Suggestions Made by Lay Church Members

Response	Frequency	%
Strongly agree	122	19.1
Agree	215	33.6
Neutral	94	14.7
Disagree	84	13.1
Strongly disagree	125	19.5
Total	640	100.0

Table 43: Sense of Co-Responsibility (with the Clergy) among the Laity for the Life and Mission of the Church

Responses	Conviction about co-responsibility		Satisfied with co-responsibility	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Strongly agree	124	19.4	31	4.8
Agree	341	53.3	238	37.2
Neutral	114	17.8	102	15.9
Disagree	61	9.5	193	30.2
Strongly disagree	0	0.0	76	11.9
Total	640	100.0	640	100.0

Table 44: Laity's Satisfaction with the Extent to which they have been empowered to be Co-Responsible for Primary Evangelization

Responses	Satisfaction with Co-responsibility	
	Freq.	%
Strongly agree	2	0.3
Agree	73	11.4
Neutral	131	20.5
Disagree	332	51.9
Strongly disagree	102	15.9
Total	640	100.0

Table 45: Awareness of Vatican II among the Laity

Responses	Yes	No	Total
Questionnaire	389	65	454
Interviews	154	32	186
Group Discussions	331	56	387
Total	874	153	1027

(c) Percentage of 'yes' responses = 874/1027 % = 85.1%
(d) Percentage of 'no' responses = 153/1027 % = 14.9%

Table 46: Awareness of the First National Pastoral Congress among the Laity

Responses	Yes	No	Total
Questionnaire	252	202	454
Interviews	99	87	186
Group Discussions	210	177	387
Total	561	466	1027

(a) Percentage of 'yes' responses = 561/1027 % = 54.6%
(b) Percentage of 'no' responses = 466/1027 % = 45.4%

Table 47: Establishment of SCCs in the Parishes: Responses by the Laity

Responses	Yes	No	Total
Questionnaire	140	314	454
Interviews	57	129	186
Total	197	443	640

(d) Percentage of 'yes' responses = 197/ 640 % = 30.8%
(e) Percentage of 'no' responses = 443/ 640 % = 69.2%

Table 48: The Number of Established SCCs which are Functioning: Laity

Responses	Freq.	%
Functioning	89	45.2
Not Functioning/Extinct	108	54.8
Total	197	100.0

Table 49: Years of SCCs' Establishment: Laity

Years	Freq.	%
Less than a year	3	1.5
1-9	117	59.4
10-19	58	29.5
20-29	12	6.1
30-39	4	2.0
40 and above	3	1.5
Total	197	100.0

NB: SCCs established after first African Synod (1994) = 1.5+59.4+29.5% = 90.4%

Table 50: Sense of Belonging to the Church as a Family by the Laity

Response	Sense of Belonging (Spiritual)		Sense of Belonging (Social)	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Strongly agree	518	80.9	32	5.0
Agree	120	18.8	283	44.2
Neutral	2	0.3	77	12.0
Disagree	0	0	186	29.1
Strongly disagree	0	0	62	9.7
Total	640	100.0	640	100.0

Table 51: Sense of Belonging (Social) by the Laity and SCCs in Parishes

Responses	Belonging (Social)		SCCs in Parishes		SCCs in Parishes	
	Freq.	%	Yes (Freq.)	Yes (%)	No (Freq.)	No (%)
Strongly agree	32	5.0	13	2.0	19	3.0
Agree	283	44.2	109	17.1	174	27.2
Neutral	77	12.0	18	2.8	59	9.2
Disagree	186	29.1	43	6.7	143	22.3
Strongly disagree	62	9.7	14	2.2	48	7.5
Total	640	100.0	197	30.8	443	69.2

NB: Those who were not content with sense of social belonging in church = 77+186+62= 325
Of this lot, 250 (59+143+48) said they had no SCCs in their parish.
Their percentage = 250/325 % = 76.9%.

Table 52: Sense of Belonging (Social) among the Laity in Rural and Urban Parishes

Responses	Belonging (Social)	Rural Parishes	Urban Parishes
	Freq.	Freq.	Freq.
Strongly agree	32	27	5
Agree	283	184	99
Neutral	77	37	40
Disagree	186	13	173
Strongly disagree	62	0	62
Total	640	261	379

Table 53: Sense of Belonging (Social) and Membership of Associations by the Laity

Responses	Belonging (Social)	Membership of Associations	
	Freq.	Yes (Freq.)	No (Freq.)
Strongly agree	9	7	2
Agree	82	68	14
Neutral	25	19	6
Disagree	53	31	22
Strongly disagree	17	2	15
Total	186 (interviewees)	127	59

Table 54: How often Lay Representatives on Councils/Committees Liaise with Members of their Associations/Groups: Responses by Interviewees

Response	Freq.	%
Always	7	3.8
Usually	55	29.6
Sometimes	61	32.8
Rarely	52	27.9
Never	11	5.9
Total	186 (interviewees)	100.0

Table 55: Members of the Diocesan Councils/Committees are Satisfactorily engaged by the Bishop in the Decision-Making Process of the Diocese

Response	Freq.	%
Strongly agree	24	12.9
Agree	70	37.6
Neutral	31	16.7
Disagree	44	23.7
Strongly disagree	17	9.1
Total	186 (interviewees)	100.0

Table 56: How often Proposals of the Diocesan Councils/Committees are approved by the Bishop

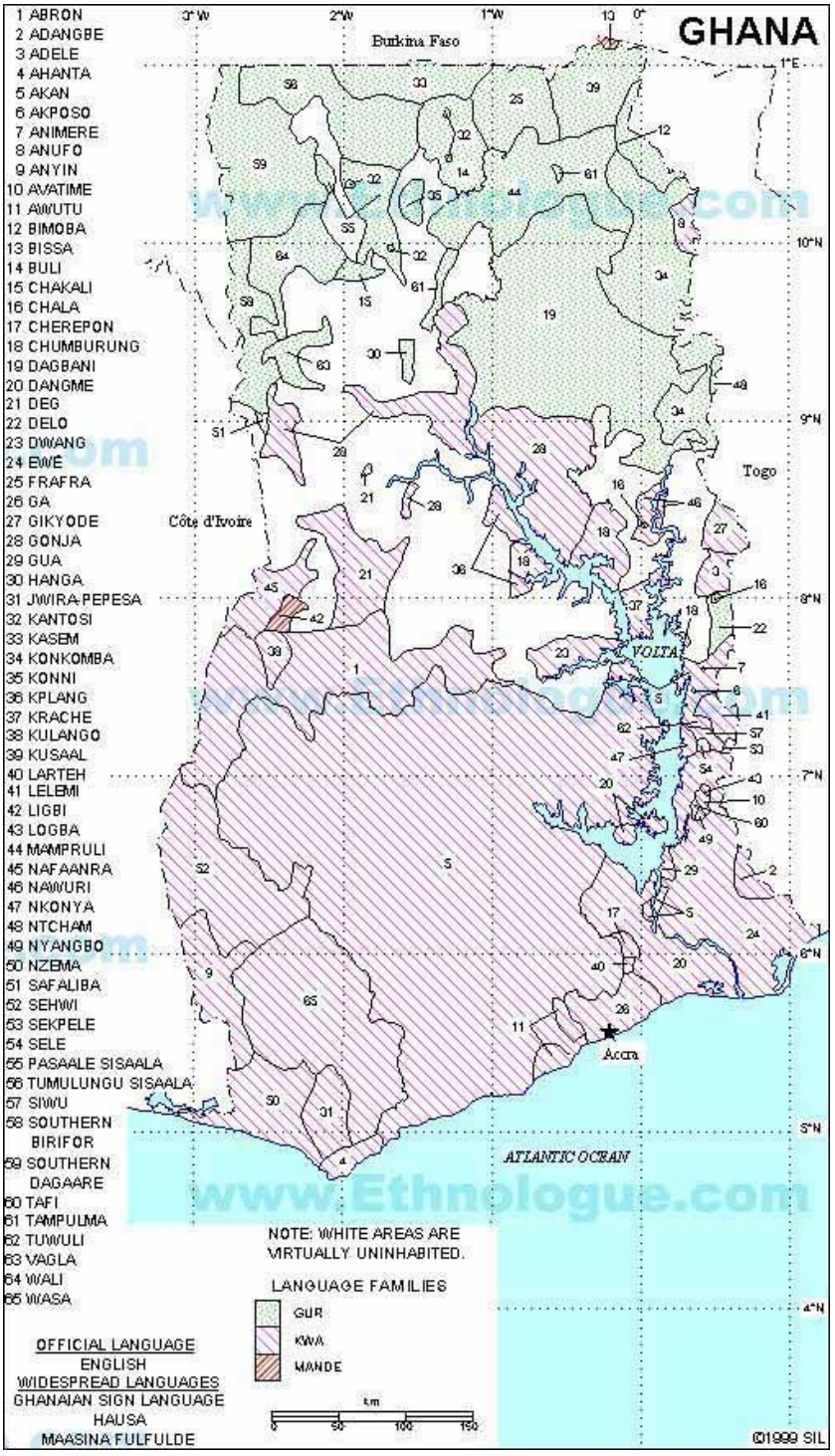
Response	Freq.	%
Always	9	4.8
Usually	82	44.1
Sometimes	71	38.2
Rarely	20	10.8
Never	4	2.1
Total	186	100.0

Table 57: How Laity feel about Decision-Making Process on the National Level

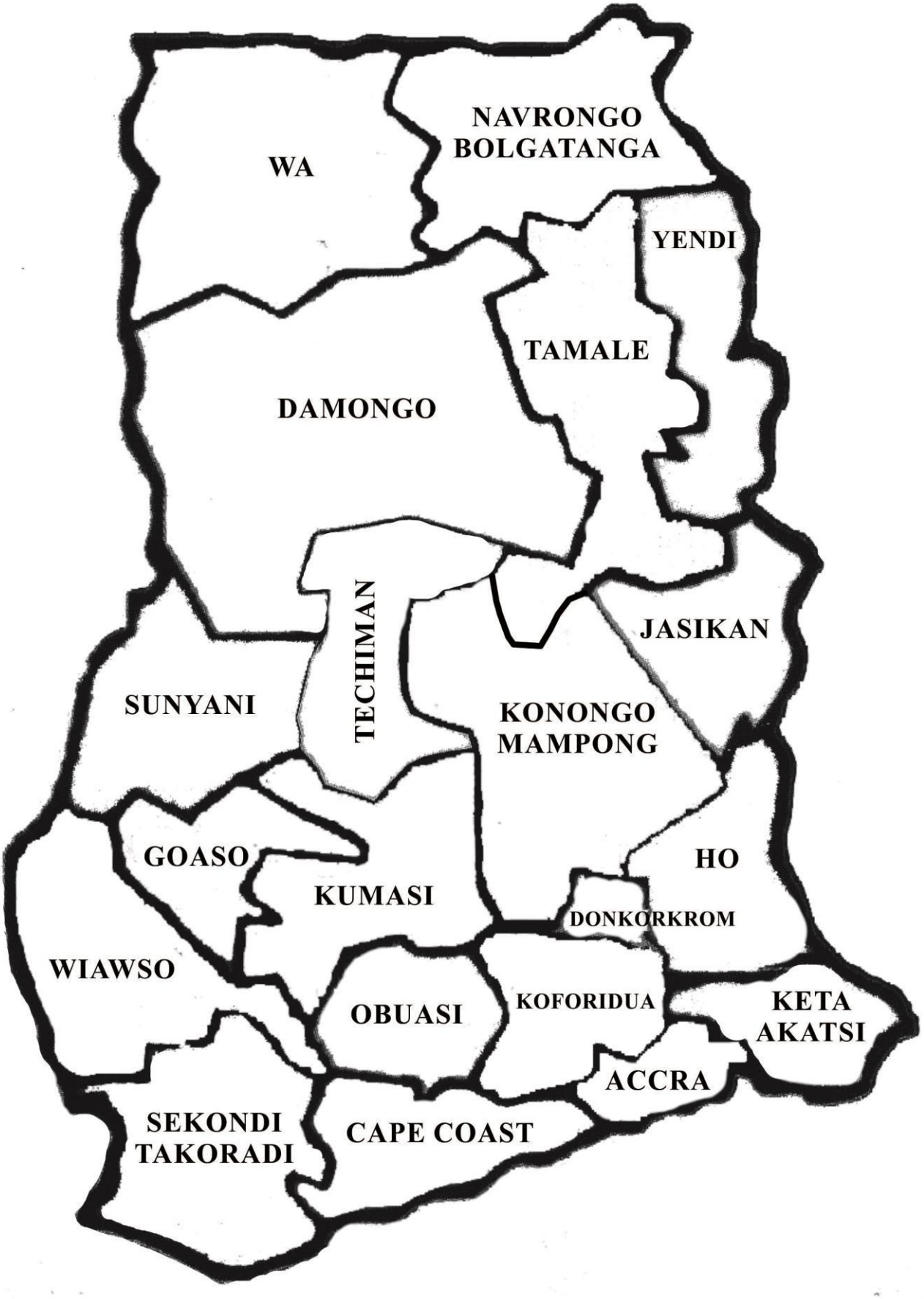
Response	Freq.	%
Very Satisfactory	2	1.1
Satisfactory	46	24.7
Neutral	59	31.7
Dissatisfactory	62	33.3
Very Dissatisfactory	17	9.2
Total	186	100.0

APPENDIX VII: MAPS OF GHANA

Map 1: Ethnographic Map of Ghana



Map 2: Showing the Catholic Dioceses in Ghana



Source: Ghana Catholic Diary and Directory 2014 © Catholic Book Centre, Accra, 2013